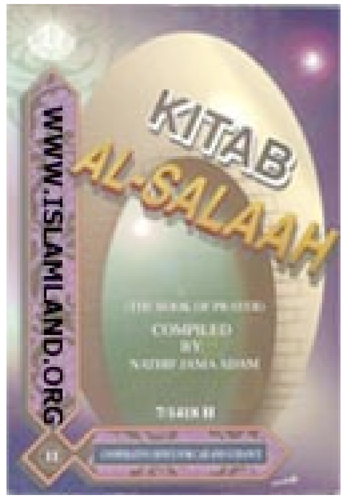


Kitab Al-Salaah
(The book of Prayer)

Compiled by: Nathif Jama Adam.

Preface

Introduction
The Virtues Of Prayer
Wudhu (Ablution)
Conditions for the Performance of Wudhu
Essential Acts of Wudhu
Voluntary Acts of Wudhu
How the Wudhu is performed
Important Points on Wudhu
Wiping Over the Socks
How Wiping Over the Socks is Done
When the Wiping Privilege Ceases
Matters which Invalidate the Wudhu
Ghusl (Total Bath)
Occasions when Ghusl is Required as an obligatory Act
Occasions for which Ghusl is preferred
Essential Requirements of Ghusl
How Ghusl is Performed
Acts Forbidden to Persons who are required to Perform Ghusl
Haidh (Menstruation)
Post-Childbirth Bleeding (Nifas)
Acts Forbidden to Women Experiencing Menstruation and Post-Childbirth Bleeding
At-Tayammum (Ablution Using The Earth)
Instances when At-Tayammum is Permitted
The Earth (Soil) to be used for At-Tayammaum
How to Perform At-Tayammum
Matters which Nullify At-Tayammum
The Timings Of The Obligatory Prayers Adhaan (Call To Prayer)
The Virtues of Adhaan
How the Adhaan is performed
What Someone Supplicates Upon Hearing the Adhaan
The Supplication after the Adhaan
IQAMAH Second Call to Prayer
Performance Of The Salaat
Conditions for the Prayer (Shuruud-Salaat)
Categories of the Acts of the Salaat
Pillars of the Salaat (Arkanu-S alaat)
Necessary Duties (Wajibatu-Salaat)
Preferred Acts of the Salaat (Sunna- nu-Salaat)
How The Salaat Is Performed
Performance of Fajr the Prayer
Performance of the Dhuhr Prayer
Performance of the Asr Prayer
Performance of the Maghrib Prayer
Performance of the Isha Prayer
Forgetfulness Prostrations (Sujuud Sahw)

Various Instances Where "Sujuud Sahw" Becomes Apparent
Private Supplications Recited Upon completing Prayers
Things Which Invalidate The Prayer (Mubdilatu-Salaat)
Things Which Are Not Preferred In The Prayer
Other Important Notes Regarding Prayer Congregational Prayer
Purpose of the Congregational Prayer
The Prayer Of A Travelling Person (Musafir)
Characteristics of combining the prayers
Performance Of The Prayer By One Who Is Sick Voluntary Prayers
Times When Performance of Voluntary Prayers is Prohibited
Juma'h Prayer (Friday Con- Gregational Prayer)
The Performance of the Juma'h Prayer
The Prayers Of The Two Feasts
Idul-Fitr Prayer
Idul-Adha Prayer
Salatul-Istisqua (Rain Seeking Prayer)
Eclipse Prayer (Salatul-Kusoof)
The Witr (Odd Number) Prayer
Tarawih Prayer
Salatul-Isstikhara (Prayer To Seek Allah's Guidance) Salatul-Janaza (Funeral Prayer)
How the Funeral Prayer is Performed
A Summary Of The Different Types Of Prayers

Preface

PRAISE be to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala[1]) who ordained As-alaat (Prayer) as an act of worship on His servants, and may the utmost peace and blessings of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) be upon His prophet who taught the Ummah (Muslim nation) how best to perform the prayer.

I do not intend to write along preface, but I merely wish to make a brief explanation of my reasons for undertaking this work. It is natural that by virtue of its importance, many books have been written in the past about Salaat by different Muslims in different parts of the world - may Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) reward them all for their efforts. And, while a large number of the works so far carried out on Salaat have generally been well appreciated, it is however no secret also that many books on this subject suffer serious shortcomings which notably may be summarized as follows:

1. Apparent lack of subject comprehensiveness in most books. While, certainly, no single writer can comprehend a subject as wide as Salaat, but it is true that many books on this subject only make scanty touch on it.
2. The unfortunate existence in many of the books of various matters such as recitations, supplications and even acts purported to be part of the prayer but which cannot be correctly traced to having been recited and/or performed by the Prophet (PBUH) or even by his rightly guided Caliphs (successors).
3. The absence of arrangement and order in most books with regard to the various matters relating to the prayer.
4. The virtual absence in most books of TRANSLITERATION to the various supplications which a person needs to recite in the course of the prayer. Needless to say, but, the importance of transliteration to the non-Arabic speaking Muslims cannot be over-emphasized.

In view of the foregoing that the thought of compiling a more appropriate treatise on Salaat arose to me. And it is by the grace of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) that it is now in our hands although I am quite conscious of how unequal I am to a subject such as this one to which a man of much greater capabilities than myself was required. I am, however, sustained by the conviction that the readers will overlook my shortcomings and treat them with indulgence.

In compiling this treatise, I have endeavored to touch over almost all the important aspects of the prayer and there is perhaps no other book which provides such an elaborate account of the subject although, as mentioned earlier. Salaat is just such a wide subject that even this treatise is still in want of much other information on the same but which, lnsha - Allah, shall be taken into account in the next reproduction.

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[1] Subhanahu wa ta'ala inserted after the name of Allah which means " The Glorified, the Most High ".

How far I have succeeded in this work is not for me to say but it is my sincere hope that it will, InshaAllah, go a long way in fulfilling the gaps and shortcomings found in other books written so far on the subject. The book, however cannot and, is not meant to be a substitute to the other works on the Salaat but rather complementary. Meanwhile, man is to err and this work may not necessarily be free from errors whether technical, typographical or otherwise. Hence, I make a kind appeal to all those who may discover something incorrect in this work to communicate the same to the publishers for due correction in the next re-print.

Compiling such work, did not only require my reference to a wide range of books including the Holy Qur'an, Hadith books and Fiqh (Jurisprudence) books but also to seek the help of other learned Muslim brethren. And in this regard, my appreciation goes to Sheikh Hamoud M. Al-Lahim and Brother Abdalla Karshe both of Riyadh - may the Almighty Allah bless them for their continuous counseling and advice. Similarly, this work would not have been completed had it not been for the tireless efforts of brother Muhammed Ameen Cave of the Cooperative office for Call and Guidance, Riyadh, who not only did the system data entering but even helped so much in the final proof-reading - may Allah reward him for his share of contribution in this work.

NATHIF J. ADAM.
Riyadh, 21st May, 1991.

Introduction

Salaat (Prayer) is one of the main obligations which Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has ordained on His servants. It is the first act of worship decreed on the Muslim Nation (Ummah) by Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and was ordained on the night of the Prophet's (peace be upon him) ascension to the seven heavens. It is the second of the five pillars of Islam after the proclamation of the "Shahada" (the words of witness).

It is enjoined on the Muslims as an obligatory act by Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) as can be noted from the following verses of the Holy Qur'an:***" Establish regular prayers at the sun's decline till the darkness of the night, and the morning prayer"*** (Qur'an 17:78). In another verse Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says:***" And establish regular prayers at the two ends of the day and at the approaches of the night"*** (Qur'an 11:1 14).

The importance of the Salaat has also been explicitly expressed by Allah's Messenger (peace be upon him), as can be noted from the following sayings:***" What lies between a perfect man and disbelief is the leaving of prayer"*** (Related by Imams Ahmed and Muslim).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said:***" The obligation which separates us from them (the non-believers) is the prayer and he who renounces it becomes a disbeliever"*** (Related by Imams Ahmed and Muslim).

The above quoted Qur'anic commands by Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and the honored sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him) clearly indicate the importance of Salaat such that it is unanimously agreed by all Muslim scholars that renouncing it is regarded an act of disbelief (Kufr).

The Virtues Of Prayer

Salaat (Prayer) performed genuinely with humility and submission to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has unlimited virtues and benefits. It is the noblest expression of faith and the surest way of thanking Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) for His unlimited favors. It is the way to obtaining Allah's mercy, generosity, kindness, blessings and a sure way to paradise. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says in the Holy Qur'an:***" Prosperous indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers"*** (Qur'an 23:1-2).

It is a deliverance on the Day of Judgement for those who used to observe it well. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says:***" The first thing that the servant of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) will be called to account for on the Day of Judgement will be the prayer; and if it was good the person's deeds will have been good, but if it was bad, the person's deeds will have been bad"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Prayer purifies the soul, refines the character and inculcates in man the excellent virtues of truthfulness, honesty and modesty. It keeps one who performs it from falsehood and from all forbidden actions as is categorically confirmed by the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:***" Verily, prayer refrains from indecency and evil"*** (Qur'an 29:45).

Wudhu (Ablution)

Prior to entering Salaat, the person is required to undertake a certain purification procedure known as "Wudhu" without which, the person's prayer would not be acceptable in the sight of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). Allah,-the Almighty, says:***" O ye who believe, when ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces and your arms to the elbows,-rub your heads (with water),- and (wash) your feet to the ankles"*** (Qur'an 5:6).

And the Prophet (peace be upon him), said:***" Prayer without ablution is invalid"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

Conditions for the Performance of Wudhu

There are various conditions required to be fulfilled in the performance of Wudhu which are as follows:

1. Acceptance of the Islamic Faith.
2. Sanity and consciousness.
3. Intention (Anniyah) to perform Wudhu as an act of worship.
4. Purifying oneself from urine, excrement and all other kind of impurities before performing Wudhu.
5. Ensuring the purity of the water to be used for the Wudhu.
6. Ensuring that water is not prevented from reaching the parts of the body which need to be washed in the performance of the Wudhu.
7. Being conscious and keeping the Wudhu in mind.

Essential Acts of Wudhu

1. Washing the entire face once with Rinsing the mouth with water and Sniffing of water in and out of the nostrils.
2. Washing each arm once.
3. Wiping the entire head once and passing of water outside and inside of the earlobes.
4. Washing the feet up to the ankles.
5. Ensuring that the above 4 acts are performed in the given sequence.
6. Performing the Wudhu acts continuously and without unnecessary let-ups until completion.

Voluntary Acts of Wudhu

Besides the above essential acts of Wudhu, there are also some voluntary but recommended acts in the Wudhu procedure. These are as follows:

1. Invoking Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) at the start of the Wudhu.
2. Washing of both hands up to the wrists.

How the Wudhu is performed

The essential and voluntary acts discussed above shall now be integrated to demonstrate how the Prophet (peace be upon him), used to perform Wudhu:

1. Making the intention to perform Wudhu as an act of sincere homage and worship for the pleasure of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). The intention need not be uttered but it should be kept in mind during the Wudhu.

2. Invoking Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) at the start of the Wudhu by saying: BISMILLAHI ARRAHMANI ARRAHIIM (in the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful).

3. Washing the hands up to the wrists three times, while rubbing them and letting the water reach between the fingers.

4. Rinsing the mouth with water thrice, preferably using the "Miswak" (tooth stick), toothbrush, or fingers to brush the teeth and the gum. Regarding the importance of the Miswak, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:***" If it had not been too great a burden on my Ummah, I would have ordered them to use the Miswak at every Wudhu"*** (Reported by Imam Malik).

5. Cleaning the nostrils by sniffing water in and out three times.

6. Washing the entire face thrice using both hands from the top of the forehead down to the bottom of the chin and from ear to ear.

7. Washing the arms three times up to the upper end of the elbows: right arm first, and then, left arm. Arms should be rubbed while they are being washed.

8. Wetting both hands and passing the same over the head starting from above the forehead down to the nape (the back of the neck) and from there, returning both hands up to above the forehead.

9. From the head, without wetting the hands again, the person wipes the earlobes, using the fore fingers to wipe the inner part of the lobes and the thumbs for the outside part.

10. Washing both feet up to the ankles three times, beginning with the right foot and then with the left foot. Both feet should be rubbed while they are being washed and water should freely pass between the toes.

Important Points on Wudhu

1. Much virtue is attached to Wudhu which is properly performed as can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him):***" A person who performs Wudhu properly will have his sins removed from his body, so much that the sins are removed even from underneath his nails"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

2. Having completed the Wudhu, the person may recite the "SHAHADA", i.e. the words of witness and the supplication for concluding the Wudhu as follows: ASH-HADUANLAA ILAHA ILLA-LAAHU WA ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA RASUULUHU. ALLAHUMMA IJ'ALNII MINA T-A WABIIN WA IJ'ALNII MINA-L MUTAHIRIIN, which means: I bear witness that there is no god but Allah and that Muhammad is His servant and messenger... O Lord, make me among those who return to you in repentance and of those who are undefiled. Regarding the virtue of the above supplication, the leader of the faithful, Umar lbn-ul Khattab (may Allah be pleased with him) reported the Prophet (peace be upon him) as saying:***" If anyone performs the Wudhu completely and then says, I testify that there is no god but Allah alone, He has no partner: and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and messenger, the eight gates of Paradise will be opened for him and may enter by whichever of the gates he wishes"*** (Related by Imam Muslim).

3. When performing Wudhu, it is recommended to let the water reach beyond the area required to be washed (e.g., when washing the arms the person may wash beyond the elbows or beyond the ankles when washing the feet). Great virtue has been attached to this fact, as can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him):***" My nation (Ummah) will be called (distinguished) on the Day of Judgement as a people with bright faces and limbs from the effect of their Wudhu practices. Therefore, anyone of you who wishes to increase his brightness may do so (by washing beyond the required areas when performing Wudhu)"*** (Reported by lmams Bukhari and Muslim).

4. The person is required to avoid use of water more than what is necessary.

5. Much importance has been attached to the performance of two rakaats after performing Wudhu as can be noted from the following conversation between the Prophet (peace be upon him) and Bilal, the first Muadhin (may Allah be pleased with him):***" O Bilal! tell me which of your acts is most meritorious since joining Islam, for I heard the sound of your shoes in Paradise ahead of me? Bilal replied: I do not have any action more meritorious than that whenever I performed Wudhu (purification) during the day or night, each time I offered a prayer as much as Allah has destined for me"*** (Reported by Imams Bukhari and Muslim).

Wiping Over the Socks

1. If someone's "Wudhu", gets nullified, then, when performing a subsequent Wudhu, it is allowed to wipe over the socks with wet hands, instead of washing both feet on condition that the socks were put on after washing the feet in the first Wudhu or before the same is nullified.

2. A traveler may avail himself of this privilege continuously for three consecutive days and nights (72 hours), but a resident may do so for only one day and one night continuously (24 hours).

How Wiping Over the Socks is Done

Wiping is done according to the tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him), as follows: After removing the shoes, wet hands are passed only over the upper surface of socks without the need to wipe the bottom parts.

When the Wiping Privilege Ceases

The wiping privilege becomes invalid in the event that one or more of the following cases occur:

1. When the maximum timings allowed as discussed earlier lapse.
2. The moment the socks are removed.
3. When any of the cases requiring "Ghusl" occur.

Matters which Invalidate the Wudhu

The person will remain in a state of Wudhu until any of the following matters is committed:

1. Passing of excrement, urine or wind. When someone passes urine and/or excrement, it becomes mandatory upon such a person to remove the foulness of these things before performing Wudhu. Pure water should be used for this purpose, but in case, it is not available after earnest search for it, the person may resort to the use of certain dry objects, such as stones, dry woods and tissue paper to remove the filth. This is known as "Istijmaar". Odd numbers of the object to be used is preferred, such as 3, 5, etc. The person should ensure that no drops of urine or stains of foulness are left on his/her body or clothes. However, in the case of persons afflicted with permanent wetting or permanent passing of wind, or of women who are suffering from prolonged flows of blood, such persons are required to perform Wudhu only once before the start of each

prayer and their Wudhu would remain valid even if the above problems may occur later in the course of the prayer.

2. Eating of camel's meat.
3. Sleeping in which the person losses consciousness.
4. Loss of consciousness resulting from insanity, fainting, etc.
5. Touching of the sexual organs intentionally, directly and unclothed.
6. Renouncing of Islamic Faith.

Ghusl (Total Bath)

Ghusl in Islam means the bathing of the entire body with water. Proof of its legitimacy is embodied in the Holy Qur'an as follows:***" And if ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body"*** (Qur'an 5:6).

Occasions when Ghusl is Required as an obligatory Act

Ghusl is required as an obligatory act in the following cases:

1. After the discharge of semen as a result of stimulation whether awake or asleep (i.e. in a wet dream). This state is known in Arabic as "JUNUB". If, after the dream no wetness is traced in one's clothing, bathing is not obligatory. However, in case wetness is found but without recalling any dream, performing Ghusl is obligatory.
2. After sexual intercourse (or the mere coming together of the two organs of a man and a woman, even though there may be no actual ejaculation) performing Ghusl is required.
3. Following a period of menstruation, a woman is required to perform Ghusl.
4. At the end of 40 days after childbirth, a woman is required to perform Ghusl but if the bleeding stops before completing the 40 days period, then she must make the Ghusl as soon as the bleeding stops.
5. When a Muslim dies, Ghusi is required for him/her except for the Jihad Martyr (Shahead).

Occasions for which Ghusl is preferred

Ghusl is recommended in the following cases:

1. Before going to Jumah Congregational (Friday Prayer).
2. Before going to Eid Prayers (Muslim annual feast prayers).
3. Before undertaking Umrah or Hajj (Pilgrimage to Makkah).
4. Upon washing a corpse. (According to many scholars, the performance of Ghusl is preferred for a person who washes a corpse).
5. When a disbeliever reverts to Islam.

Essential Requirements of Ghusl

There are two essential requirements which need to be fulfilled for Ghusl to be valid. These are as follows:

1. Intention to perform Ghusl is necessary because it is the dividing line between acts performed as a mere custom and deeds which are rewardable acts of worship. However, the intention is only by heart and need not be uttered.
2. The entire body should be washed. Water should reach and flow freely over every part of the body.

How Ghusl is Performed

Besides the above two essential requirements, there are also other voluntary acts recommended for Ghusl. Both the essential and the voluntary acts are now integrated here below to demonstrate how the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform the Ghusl:

1. Intend by heart to perform Ghusl.
2. Wash both hands up to the wrists three times.
3. Wash the sex organs properly.
4. Perform Wudhu as usual (in the manner already discussed) except, that the washing of the feet would be delayed until later when all the rest of the body is bathed.
5. Pour water over the head three times, massaging the hair to allow water to reach its roots.
6. Pour water liberally over the entire body, beginning with the right side and then, the left side ensuring that no part of the body is untouched by water such as the armpits, inside the earlobes, inside the navel, between the fingers and toes, etc.
7. Finally, move a little further from where you were and wash your feet, beginning with your right foot and then, the left.

Notes:

1. A woman will perform Ghusl just as a man does, except, that if she has plaited hair, she need not undo it. She only needs to throw three handfuls of water over her head (this is for the Junub [the one who is in the state of major impurity after sexual intercourse or semen discharge] but for the one who has just finished her monthly period or post-birth period, she must undo her plaited hair).
2. The person may after completing the Ghusl recite the supplication for concluding Ghusl which should be recited outside the toilet/bathroom and which is the same as the one recited after completing Wudhu.

Acts Forbidden to Persons who are required to Perform Ghusl

Persons required to perform Ghusl are forbidden to undertake certain acts. These are as follows:

1. Any type of prayer whether obligatory or voluntary.
2. Circumambulating the Ka'abah (Tawaf).
3. Touching or carrying the Holy Qur'an. However, the prohibition does not apply to other books which contain Qur'anic passages such as commentaries of the Holy Qur'an or works of Islamic jurisprudence.
4. Reciting the Holy Qur'an.
5. Staying Inside the Mosque.

Haidh (Menstruation)

This refers to the periodical discharge of blood by women in their state of health and is easily distinguishable to women from post-childbirth bleeding.

Post-Childbirth Bleeding (Nifas)

Such bleeding usually occurs to women after childbirth and may continue without fixed duration, although in some cases, there may not occur bleeding at all. However, on the strength of the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), a woman experiencing post-childbirth bleeding has a maximum confinement period of about forty (40) days after which, she is required to make Ghusl and commence her Islamic duties. If, however, the blood does not cease after 40 days, most scholars are of the opinion that the woman should continue with her regular Islamic duties.

Acts Forbidden to Women Experiencing Menstruation and Post-Childbirth Bleeding

1. All acts mentioned herein before, as forbidden to persons requiring Ghusl are also prohibited to women experiencing menstruation and post-childbirth bleeding.
2. A woman cannot engage in a sexual intercourse.

The companions of the Prophet (peace be upon him), asked him about this and Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) revealed the following Qur'anic verse:***" They ask thee concerning women's courses. say- they area hurt and a pollution.- so keep away from women in their courses, and do not approach them until they are clean .... "*** (Qur'an 2:222).

However, all scholars are of the opinion that a husband may touch any part of his wife's body above the navel and/or below the knees. This fact, is based on the confirmations of the Prophet's wives, that when the Prophet (peace be upon him) wished to be with them during their periods, they would put something over their private parts.

At-Tayammum (Ablution Using The Earth)

"At-Tayammum" is a means of using the soil to wipe one's face and hands with the intention of preparing oneself to perform prayer. Proof of its legitimacy is found in the Holy Qur'an as follows:*"* ***And if you are ill, or on a journey, or one of you cometh from offices of nature, or ye have been in contact with women, and ye find no water, then take for yourselves clean sand or earth, and rub therewith your faces and hands, for Allah does blot out sins and forgives again and again"*** (Qur'an 4:43).

The Prophet (peace be upon him), also said:*"* ***All of the earth has been made a pure place of prayer for me and my Ummah (Nation). Whenever a person from my nation wants to pray, he has something with which to purify himself ... that is the earth"*** (Reported by Imam Ahmad).

Instances when At-Tayammum is Permitted

At-Tayammum is permitted only on specific instances as follows:

1. Where the person cannot find water or the amount of water is not sufficient for Wudhu. However, before performing At-Tayammum, the person is required to look for water earnestly from any possible source.
2. When a person is injured or ill and believes that the use of water will worsen his/her condition, then, At-Tayammum is allowed.
3. When water is too cold such that it may harm the person, At-Tayammum is allowed if the user cannot find means of heating the water.
4. When water is nearby, but the person is not able to fetch it due to fear for his/her life, family and wealth, (e.g. from an enemy either beast or human in the vicinity) then, At-Tayammum may be performed.
5. When there is not enough water and one is forced to save what is available for drinking and/or cooking, then, At-Tayammum is allowed.

The Earth (Soil) to be used for At-Tayammaum

This should be pure earth or soil and can be sand, stone or gypsum which produce dust when hit with the hands.

How to Perform At-Tayammum

A. The person should first intend by heart to perform At-Tayammum.

B. The person then strike the soil with the palms of both hands.

C. The person then wipes the face using both palms.

D. Thereafter, the person uses the left palm to wipe over the back of the right hand up to the wrist, and then, uses the right palm to wipe over the back of the left hand upto the wrist.

Notes:

i. If any dust clings to the hands upon striking the earth, it should be blown out first before wiping the face and the hands to avoid the dust.

ii. Only one strike on the earth is sufficient for wiping both the face and hands.

iii. For persons who are required to perform Ghusl, but are unable to find water, then, At-Tayammum as discussed would suffice.

Matters which Nullify At-Tayammum

Purification by At-Tayammum has the same validity as Wudhu and Ghusl performed with water, but becomes invalidated in the following cases:

- All actions and conditions that nullify Wudhu also nullify At-Tayammum.
- If after performing At-Tayammum, water is found for Wudhu or Ghusl.

The Timings Of The Obligatory Prayers

Islam has prescribed specified time limits for each of prayer as can be noted from the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:*“ **Prayer is enjoined on believers at stated times”*** (Qur'an 4:103).

And in an authentic prophetic saying it is confirmed that someone once asked the prophet (peace be upon him) about the best action in the sight of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and the prophet replied:***“ Offering prayer at its prescribed time”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Thus, the arrival of the time for prayer is a fundamental condition for performing it and if, therefore, a prayer is intentionally performed before or after its designated time it shall not be acceptable in the sight of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). However, persons who may forget (without intention) to perform any of the obligatory prayers within its ordained time or who are overtaken by sleep, then such persons should perform the prayer as soon as they remember it and/or as soon as they wake up from their sleep.

We shall now enumerate the different timings of the five obligatory prayers:

1. **FAJR (Dawn) PRAYER**:Its time begins at dawn when morning light first appears in the horizon and continues until the sun rises.
2. **DHUHR (Noon) PRAYER**:Its time begins when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky and continues up to the time of Asr Prayer.
3. **ASR (Afternoon) PRAYER**:Its time begins when the shadow of an object is equal to its own length, plus the length of its noontime shadow and continues until sunset.
4. **MAGHRIB (Sunset) PRAYER**:Its time starts from sunset and continues until the end of twilight. Twilight is the redness which remains in the horizon after sunset.
5. **ISHA (Evening) PRAYER**:Its time starts when the twilight disappears and continues up to mid-night. Mid-night in this case may not necessarily be interpreted to mean 12:00 o'clock but may be construed as the mid-time between sunset and the appearance of the true dawn.

Adhaan (Call To Prayer)

The "Adhaan" is a call to inform others in specific words that the time for a particular prayer has begun. It is a call to the congregation and is an expression of the Islamic practice. It is required as an act for all the Obligatory Prayers.

The Virtues of Adhaan

The greatness of the virtue which Islam attaches to the "Adhaan" and the one who performs it i.e. the "Muadhin", can be noted from the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:***" Who is better in speech than one who calls (the people) to allah and works righteousness"*** (Qur'an 41:33).

The mother of the faithful, Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) confirmed that this verse concerns and refers to the Muadhin and was revealed on no other reason than for the Muadhin.

And, from the prophetic traditions, Abu Hurairah reported that the Prophet (peace be upon him), said:***" If the people knew the reward in the Adhaan and the first row of the prayer and that they could not get it (the reward) save by drawing lots, they would draw lots"*** (Narrated by Imam Bukhari).

And, in another saying the Prophet (peace be upon him), said:***" The Muadhins will on the Day of Judgement have the longest necks (reflecting their exclusive eminence)"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

How the Adhaan is performed

Preferably, there should be an appointed Muadhin at each Mosque who will call the people to prayer when the time of a particular prayer is due. In performing the Adhaan, the Muadhin would stand facing the direction of the "Qiblah" (the sacred mosque in Makkah). He would then raise both hands up to his ears and say in a loud voice the following words:

1. ALLAHU AKBAR - Allah is the greatest (to be repeated 4 times).
2. ASH-HADU ANLA ILAHA ILLALLAAH - I testify that there is no god but Allah. (to be repeated 2 times).
3. ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN RASUULULLAAH - I testify that Muhammad is Allah's messenger. (to be repeated 2 times).
4. HAYYAA LAS SALAAT - Come fast to prayer. (to be repeated 2 times). The Muadhin, when reciting this turns the face slightly to the right side.

5. HAYYAA LAL FALAAH - Come fast to success. (to be repeated 2 times). The Muadhin, when reciting this turns the face slightly to the left side.
6. ALLAHU AKBAR -Allah is the greatest. (to be repeated 2 times).
7. LAA ILAHA ILLALLAAH - There is no god but Allah. (to be recited once).

Note 1: In the Adhaan ,for the **Fajr (Dawn)** prayer, the following words are recited twice after Hayya'alal Falaah: ASSALATU KHEIRUM MINA NAWM , (to be recited two times) which means - " Salaat is better than sleep ".

Note 2: Listen to ADHAAN from MAKKAH.

What Someone Supplicates Upon Hearing the Adhaan

It is preferred practice that when a person hears the Adhaan, he should repeat the words the Muadhin calls out, except, when he says "Haaya alal Salaat and Hayya alal Falaah", the listener should instead say: LA HOWLA WALA QUWATA ILA BILLAH which means, "There is no power and strength except by Allah".

The Supplication after the Adhaan

Upon the completion of the Adhaan, it is recommended that the listener recite the following supplication: ALLAHUMMA RABBA HADHIHID DA'WATI - TAMMAH, WASALATIL QA'IMAH, ATI MUHAMMADAN AL WASILATA WAL FADHILATA, - WAAB'ATHUHU MAQAMUM MAH- MUDAN-ALLADHII WAAD TAHU. which means: "O Allah, Lord of this complete call and of the prayer to be held, grant Muhammad the most favored and excellent position in the Paradise and raise him to the praise worthy place that You have promised him".

It is highly recommended to recite the above supplication at the end of every Adhaan and in this regard the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:***" It becomes obligatory upon me to intercede for him (person reciting the supplication) on the Day of Judgement"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

IQAMAH Second Call to Prayer

"Iqamah" is the second call to the prayer and is said inside the Mosque at the start of the congregational prayer. It goes as follows:

i. ALLAHU AKBAR. (repeated two times).
ii. ASH-HADU ANLA ILLAHA ILA LAAH, (once).
iii. ASH-HADU ANNA MUHAMMADAR RASULUL-LAAH, (once).
iv. HA YYA ALAS-SALAA T, (once).

v. HA YYA ALAL-FALAAH, (once).

vi. QAD QAMATIS-SALAAT, (repeated two times).

vii. ALLAHU AKBAR, (repeated two times).

viii. LAA ILAAHA ILA-LAAH, (once).

Notes:

- It is recommended that a brief time gapping be maintained between the "Adhaan" and the "Iqamah" to allow the congregation to get ready for the Salaat.
- It is preferred that the "Iqamah" is performed by the same person (Muadhin) who performed the "Adhaan".
- It is disliked for anyone to leave the mosque once the "Adhaan" is made, unless for urgent reason(s) but with a determination to return for the prayer.
- It is prohibited to offer voluntary prayers after Iqamah has been called out. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says:***" When Iqamah is called out, no prayer is permissible except the obligatory one"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).
- If a person misses a prayer due to oversleeping or forgetfulness, then, before starting the missed prayer the person should call both Adhaan and Iqamah as did the Prophet PBUH when he and his companion over slept and missed Fajer until its time was over, he PBUH commanded Bilal to call Adhaan. But if he does not, then his Salaat is valid. However, if a person misses a number of prayers, it is preferred that he comes up with only one "Adhaan" for all the missed prayers, but to come up with a separate "Iqamah" for each Salaat.
- Where a person misses the congregational prayer at the mosque, such a person, before starting to pray is at liberty to either perform or omit the Adhaan and the Iqamah. However, if he decides to perform the Adhaan, it is preferred that he does it in a low voice so as not to attract the attention of others outside.
- It is not obligatory on women to perform the Adhaan and Iqamah but if they wish to perform the same there is no harm on them to perform Iqamah only but they must lower their voice.

Performance Of The Salaat

After introducing the Salaat and discussing its pre-requisites, we shall now turn to matters pertaining to its actual performance.

Conditions for the Prayer (Shuruud-Salaat)

There are a number of conditions which need to be fulfilled for the prayer to be valid. These are as follows:

- Acceptance of Islamic Faith - disbelievers are not required to establish Salaat until they believe in Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and bear witness that there is no god but Allah and bear witness that Muhammad is His servant and messenger.
- Anniyah - this in Arabic means the intention by heart to perform the particular prayer.
- Cleanliness - this includes cleanliness of the body, the clothes and the place where the prayer is to be performed.
- Purification - this refers to the of Wudhu (or Ghusl where it is required) prior to undertaking the prayer.
- Concealing of the Private Parts - for a man, it is essential that he be covered at least from the navel to the knees all round, while, in the case of a woman, her body should be totally covered except for the face and wrists.
- Facing the "Qiblah" - this means that a person when praying must face towards the direction of the sacred mosque in "Makkah". Where a person is not able to locate the direction by himself/herself, the person may ask another person who may know the direction of the Qiblah. However, if no one is in sight to guide to the right direction, then, the person should decide for himself/herself and make the best guess of the correct direction of the Qiblah, and accordingly, perform the prayer in that direction even though the guess maybe incorrect. The prayer performed would still be acceptable (inshaa Allah) in view of the following verse of the Holy Qur'an:***" Whichever direction you turn, there is the Presence of Allah"*** (Qur'an 2: 115).
- Timing - prayers are to be observed in their prescribed times.
- Sanity and consciousness - prayer is required only from person of sound mind.
- Ability to distinguish - prayer is required only where the person (child) is able to distinguish between good and bad, and is able to understand and appreciate fully what is to be recited, performed etc.

Note:
It is preferred for children to begin performing the prayer at the age of seven for it awakens in them the presence of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and inculcates in them the habit of praying as an act of worship and love for 'Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). A child at the age of 10 is made to understand that prayer is necessarily a part of the person's daily

life and is a solemn duty ordained by Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) on all Muslims, and that failure to perform it is an act of disbelief (Kufr). Therefore, parents are required to guide their children to the right path by punishing any of them who at the age of 10 intentionally misses the prayers.

The Prophet (peace be upon him), said:*“ Order your children to pray when they reach the age of seven and punish them for not performing it at the age of ten and separate them (ie. boys and girls) in their beds”* (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Upon attaining the age of 15, a child is deemed to have reached adulthood, whereby, he/she is required to perform the prayer. Here below, are some other signs which may indicate that a child has attained adulthood:

- The growing of pubic hairs.
- Finding traces of semen on the child's clothes and/or bed.
- The start of menstruation, in the case of a girl.

Categories of the Acts of the Salaat

All the acts, readings and supplications undertaken in the course of the Salaat have different legal weights and implications. They are categorized as follows:

1. Pillars of the Salaat - (Arkanu-Salaat).
2. Necessary Duties of the Salaat (Wajibatu-Salaat).
3. Preferred Acts of the Salaat. (Sunnanu-Salaat).

We shall now discuss each of these categories in turn.

Pillars of the Salaat (Arkanu-S alaat)

The prayer has obligatory pillars, which must be fulfilled for it to be valid and these are as follows:

1. " Al-Qiyaam " - prayer is to be performed in a standing position if a person is physically capable.
2. " Takbiiratil lhraam " that is saying "ALLAHU AKHAR" at the commence - ment of the prayer.
3. " Al-Fatihah " - that is reciting the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an in every Rakaat.
4. " Rukuu " - this is bowing posture whereby the head and the back are positioned on the same level and both hands are rested on the knees with the fingers spread apart.
5. A requirement to raise the head up from the Rukuu position.

6. A requirement to stand up from the Rukuu position in such a way that the person feels that all his/her backbones are straightened.
7. " Sujuud " that is prostrating oneself in such a way that the following seven parts of the body are firmly placed on the ground: the forehead together with the tip of the nose, both the palms, both the knees, the bottom surface of the toes of both feet.
8. A requirement to raise the head from the Sujuud position.
9. A requirement to sit upright during the pause between the two prostration.
10. A requirement to take a sitting position for the recitation of the " At-Tashahucl " (words of witness).
11. A requirement to recite the final " At-Tashahud ".
12. A requirement to recite the words of supplication for the Prophet (peace be upon him).
13. A requirement to conclude the prayer with the words of peace " Tasleem ", i.e. " Assalamu Aleykum Wa Rahmatullaahi Wa Barakatuh".
14. A requirement that in fulfilling the above pillars the person should be in a state of tranquility.

The above are the pillars of the prayer, wherein, if any of them is missed, it is required to repeat the whole Rakaat (Unit) in which the pillar is omitted, but if, the Takbiirat il - lhraam is omitted, it becomes necessary to repeat the whole Salaat.

Necessary Duties (Wajibatu-Salaat)

In addition to the above 14 pillars of the prayer, there are also certain necessary duties which need to be fulfilled in the course of the Salaat. These are as follows:

1. Saying "ALLAHU AKHAR" in the course of the prayer where it is necessary, e.g. upon commencing Rukuu etc.
2. Saying "SUBHANAA RABBIYAL AZIM" when in Rukuu position.
3. Saying "SAMI ALLAHU LIMAN HAMIDAH" while resuming standing position from the Rukuu whether the person is an "Imam" (leader) or is praying alone.
4. Saying "RABBANA WALAKAL HAMD" when resuming the standing position from the Rukuu after saying the words.
5. Saying "SUBHANA RABBIYAL AALA" when in Sujuud (prostration) position.
6. Saying "RABBI IGHFIR LEE" in the sitting pause between the two prostration of every unit of the prayer.
7. Taking a sitting position for the recitation of At-Tashahud after the first two rakaats (units) of Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha prayers.
8. Reciting the At-Tashahud (words of witness) after the first two rakaats (units) of Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha prayers.

9. Saying "SAMI ALLAHU LIMAN HAMIDAH". This is required from the Imam (leader), from the congregation and even from a person who is praying alone.

The above gestures/actions constitute the necessary duties of the prayer and if one of them is missed unintentionally, then the person is required to amend the mistake by coming up with the two prostration of forgetfulness at the end of the prayer. However, if any of these duties is left out deliberately, then the whole prayer is nullified and shall require a repetition.

Preferred Acts of the Salaat (Sunna- nu-Salaat)

In addition to the Pillars and Necessary duties already discussed, there are also certain preferred acts to be fulfilled in the course of the prayer. These areas are as follows:

- Reciting of an opening supplication (Du'a-al-Istiftaah) after the "Takbiiratil- lhraam".
- Placing the hands over the chest while the person is in a standing position with the right hand placed over the left hand.
- Raising of both hands up to the level of the shoulders or near to the lobes of the ears when saying "Takbiiratil-lhraam",- when heading for the Rukuu; when resuming standing position from the Rukuu and when resuming standing position from the first tashahud.
- Seeking the protection of Allah from the cursed Satan (only at the start of the first rakaat) by saying: "Audhu billahi minas- shaytani-r-rajiim" which means, "I seek Allah's refuge from the cursed Satan."
- Starting the prayer with the silent invocation of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) by saying: "BISMILLAHI-R-RAHMANI-R-- RAHEEM" which means, "In the name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful."
- Saying "Ameen" upon concluding the recitation of "Al-Fatihah".
- Reciting some chapters or verses of the Holy Qur'an after Al-Fatihah in the first two rakaats (units) of each prayer.
- A preference that the recitation of Al- Fatihah and of any other additional readings from the Holy Qur'an are recited in a loud voice in the first two rakaats of Fajr, Maghrib and Isha prayers.
- A preference that when sitting for the first At-Tashahud and in between the two prostration, the person rests on his left foot flattened on the ground while keeping the right foot erect with the bottom of the toes firmed on the ground.
- A preference to practice At- Tawaruk when sitting for the final At-Tashahud in the Dhuhr, Asr, Maghrib and Isha prayers. "At-Tawaruk" is a mode of sitting, wherein the person protrudes out his left foot from underneath his right leg, in such a way that the person does not relax on his left foot.
- Reciting the following supplication, when sitting for At-Tashahud, in between the supplication for the Prophet (peace be upon him) and the final words of peace:

"Allahumma inii audhu bika min adha bi jahanama, wa min a dhabiil qabr wamin fitnatil mahyaa wal- ma-mati, wamin fitnatil masihid-dajaal " which means: "O Lord I seek your protection from the torment of Jahanam (the hell fire), and from the torment of the grave, and from the trials of living and dying and from the trials of the Masiih Addajaal."

The above points are the preferred acts of the prayer and all Muslims are encouraged to preserve these practices because their observance entities the person great rewards from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). However, missing any of them does neither invalidate the Salaat nor require the two prostration of forgetfulness.

How The Salaat Is Performed

Having known in detail all the different acts of the prayer, i.e. its pillars, necessary duties and preferred acts, we shall now discuss in brief how the Salaat is performed following the example of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and in due regard to his famous saying:***" Salluu kama raeytumunii usali"*** (Transmitted by Al-Bukhari) which means: "Perform your prayers in the same manner you have seen me doing." We shall discuss the performance of each prayer in its proper perspective.

Performance of Fajr the Prayer

Number of Rakaat:
Two
Recitation:
Qur'anic recitations in this prayer are made in a loud voice by the Imam in a congregation prayer and by whoever prays alone.
Performance:

1. The person turns towards the direction of the Qiblah, (the sacred Mosque at Makkah), intending by heart to perform the Fajr (Dawn) prayer. Note: The person should not pronounce his/her intention openly because neither the Prophet (peace be upon him) nor his companions used to utter their intention for prayer. Thus, pronouncing the intention in a loud voice is an innovation and is totally rejected.

2. The person then raises both hands up to the level of the shoulders or near the lobes of the ears, pronounces the "Takbiiratil-Ihraam" by saying "ALLAHU AKBAR" and places both hands over the chest with the right hand over the left. By reciting the "Takbiiratil-Ihraam", the person thus, resolves for prayer and enters into a state of worship and is thenceforth required to call to mind the majesty and glory of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and to dedicate his intentions, recitations and actions to Him (subhanahu wa ta'ala) alone until the end of the prayer. While praying the person is required to direct his eyes downward at the spot of prostration.

3. The person then recites in a low voice an opening supplication for the prayer. Here below are three of the supplications which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to practice and the Muslim is exhorted to memorize at least one of them for recitation each time a prayer is performed:

a. "SUBHANAKA ALLAHUMMA WA BEHAMDIKA WATABARAKA ISMOKA, WATA'ALA JADDOKA WALA ILAHA GHAYROKA", which means: "Praise and glory be to Allah. Blessed be Your name exalted be your majesty and glory. There is no god but You."

b. "ALLAHUMMA BAI'D BAYNI WA BAYNA KHATAYAYA KAMA BAADTA BAYNA-AL-MASHRIKI WAL MAGHRIBI. ALLAHUMMA NAQQINIY MIN KHA-

TAYAYA KAMA YONAQA-AL-THOWBO-ALABYADO MIN-AL-DANASI. ALLAHUMMA IGHSILNIY MIN KHA- TAYAYA BIL-MAI, WATHALJI,' WALBARAD" which means: "O Lord, separate me from my sins as You have separated the east and west. O Lord, cleanse me of my sins as the white robe is cleansed from dirt. O Lord, wash away my sins with water, snow and hail".

c. "WAJAHTU WAJHIYA LILLADHII FATARA-AL-SAMAWATI WAL-ARDHI HANIIFAN MUSLIMAN WAMAA ANA MINAL MUSHRIKIINA, INNA SALATII WANUSUKII WAMAHYAYA WAMA-MATII LILLAHI RABBIL'ALAMIINA LAA SHARIKA LAHU WABIDHALIKA UMIRTU WA ANA MINAL-MUSLIMIINA". which means: "I turn my face to Him Who created the heavens and the earth, as a true believer and a Muslim, and nay, am I one of the polytheists. Truly, my prayer and my sacrifices, my life and my death, all belong to Allah, Lord of the worlds, Who has no partner. This I am commanded, and I am of those who submit to His Will."

4. The person then seeks the protection of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) from the cursed Satan by saying, "A'UDU BILLAHI MIN-ASHAYTAN-IRRAJIIM ".

5. The person then silently invokes Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) by saying: "BISMI ELLAH ARRAHMAN ARRAHIIM ", which means, "In the name of Allah, the all Merciful, the all Compassionate ". The person immediately thereafter recites "AL-FATIHAH" (opening chapter of the Glorious Qur'an) in due regard to the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him):***"Prayer without reciting the Al-Fatihah is invalid"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari). Upon completion of the "Al-Fatihah" the person says "Ameen" loudly.

6. The person then recites chapters or verses from the Holy Qur'an. However, it is recommended that long passages are recited for the Fajr (Dawn) prayer. Note: If the person is praying with a congregation behind an Imam, (leader) he/she would apply Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, and would listen to the Imam reciting the "Al- Fatihah" loudly and upon the Imam completing its recitation, the person along with the rest of the congregation would say "Ameen" loudly after which, the person would apply No. 5 in a low voice.

7. Then, the person proceeds to "Rukuu" (bowing) position raising both hands up to the level of the shoulders or near the lobes of the ears saying "ALLAHU AKBAR". While in this position, the person is required to exercise serenity and tranquility positioning the head and back on the same level, putting both hands on the knees with the fingers spread and saying the following words for at least three times: "SUBHANA RABBIYAL A'ZIM ", which means "Glorified is my Lord the Great". In addition, while in Rukuu position, it is also advisable to say:" SUBHANAKA ALLAHUMMA WA BIHAMDIKA, ALLAHUMMA EGHFIRLII ", which means " Glory be to Thee, O Allah, and praise be to Thee, forgive me my sins ".

8. Then, the person raises from the "Rukuu" position lifting both hands up to the level of the shoulders or near the lobes of the ears saying: "SAMI AALLAHU LIMAN HAMIDAH", which means "Allah listens to him who praises Him". The person then,

immediately recites the following supplication while still standing: "RABBANA WA LAKA AL HAMDU HAMDAN KATHEER'AN TAYYIBAN MOBARAKAN FEEHIY MILA'S - SAMAWATI WA MILA' ALARDHI WA MILA'MA BAYNAHOMA WA MILA'MA SHIATA MIN SHIYIN BAAD", which means "Our Lord, praise be to Thee only, praises plentiful and blessings as to fill the heavens, the earth, and what is in between, and fill that which will please Thee besides them". However, if a person following an Imam in a congregational prayer is not able to complete the above supplication it suffices to say: "RABANA WA LAKA ALHAMD". It is also advisable for the Imam, the follower or one who prays alone to add further the supplication here below: "AHLU THANAA'L WALMAJDI A-HAQU MA QAALA ALABDU WAKULUNA LAKA ABD, ALLAHUMMA LA MAANI'A LIMA ADEYTA WALA MU'DIYA LIMA MAN'ATA WALA YANFA'UDHAL-JADDI MINKAL JADD", which means "You Allah who deserves all praises and all glory, Your praising is the best and most true of whatever Your servant can say, we are all Your servants. Our Lord, no one can ever deprive anything of what You have bestowed and no one can ever give anything of what You have deprived." While in the standing position after Rukuu, the person is advised to place both hands over the chest in the same manner before bowing, since, this was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him).

9. The person thereafter proceeds to prostration saying: "ALLAHU AKBAR" and touching the ground with the knees first before the hands if possible. However, if not possible, the person may touch the ground with the hands before the knees. While in prostration, the person should place seven parts of the body on the ground. These parts are: the forhead, together with the nose, both palms of the hands (fingers should be stretched, closed together and pointed towards the direction of the Qiblah), both knees, the bottom parts of the toes of both feet (toes pointed to the direction of the Qiblah). During the prostration, the person says for three times or more the following words: "SUBHANA RABBIYAL AALA", which means "Glorified is my Lord the Exalted". It is also advisable to say further: "SUBHANAKA ALLAHUMMA RABBANA WA BI HAMDIKA, ALLAHUMMA IGHFIRLII ", which means "Glory be to Thee, our Lord, and praise be to Thee. O Lord, forgive me my sins ". While in prostration, it is recommended that the person recites as many supplications as possible asking Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) for prosperity both in this worldly life and in the life hereafter because the Prophet (peace be upon him) said:***"When performing Rukuu, glorify Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), but during prostration, endeavor to make as many supplications as possible to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), for supplications during prostration are almost certain to be accepted"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim). In view of the above prophetic tradition, we quote here below some of the supplications and private prayers which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say while in prostration:

- ALLAHUMMA LAKA SAJADTU, WABIKA AMANTU, WA LAKA ASLAMTU, SAJADA WAJHII LILLADHII KHA- LAQAHU FASAWARAHU FAAH-SANA SUWARAHU, FASHAQA SAM'AHU WABASARAHU, FATABARAKA -LLAHU AHSANA-L-KHALIQIIN. which means "O Lord, to Thee I prostrate, in Thee I believe and to Thee I submit: My face prostrates to He Who created and fashioned it and made its form good and provided it with hearing and sight,- praise be to Allah, the most excellent of creators".

- RABBI A'TI NAFSII TAQWAHA, WAZAKIHA, ANTA KHAYRU-MANZA-KAHA ANTA WALIYUHAA WAMAU- LAHAA. Which means, "O Lord, give my soul its devoutness and purify it, for none other than Thou can purify it, Thou are its Lord and Master". While in prostration, the person should not bring the hands close to the head and should not stick the arms to the abdomen. Also, the person should neither stick the abdomen to thighs nor the thighs to the legs. The arms should be distanced from the body and raised up from the ground because the Prophet (peace be upon him) prohibited flattening them on the ground according to the following saying: ***"Adjust your prostration, keep straight in it and stretch not your hands on the ground as dogs do"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

10. The person thereafter raises up the head from prostration saying "ALLAHU AKBAR", and sits up resting on the left foot flattened on the ground while keeping the right foot erect with the toes of the right foot firmed on the ground. While in this position, both palms are to be placed on the knees and the person recites the following supplication: "RABIYA IGHFIRLII, WARHAMNII, WAHDINII, WAJBUR-NII, WARZUQNEE, WA'A FINEE", which means: "O my Lord, forgive me, have mercy on me, guide me, console me, provide for me, and heal me".

11. The person prostrates again saying "ALLAHU-AKBAR" and repeats what was done in the first prostration.

12. The person then raises the head from the second prostration saying "ALLAHU AKBAR", and takes a sitting pause similar to the pause between the two prostration. This is a pause for rest and it is recommended to take such a pause, although there is no harm if omitted. That is the end of one "Rakaat" (unit).

13. The person thereafter, says ALLAHU AKBAR and stands up for the second Rakaat which is performed in the same manner as the first Rakaat whereby the person comes up with all the actions and recitations from Nos. 1 up to 11 as discussed above.

14. Upon completing the second prostration as discussed in No. 12 above, the person takes a sitting for the "At- Tashahud" (words of witness) and while in this position, the fingers of the right hand are to be placed close-fisted except the index finger which the person uses to point out as an indication for monotheistic belief although, the person may as well keep both the little and the ring fingers closed, while rounding the thumb and middle finger in a ring-shaped form and uses the index finger to point out as a sign for monotheistic belief. It has been related that the Prophet (peace be upon him), practiced both these methods and it is advisable to practice the first method at times and the other method at other times. The left hand is placed on the left knee with the fingers kept open. After sitting as discussed above, the person recites the AT-Tashahud (words of witness) as follows: "AT TAHIYYATU LILAHI WASALAWATU WATAYYIBATU ASSALAMU ALAYKA AYUHAN-NABIYU WA RAHMATULLAHI WA BARAKA-TUHU ASALAMU ALAYNA WA ALA IBADI-L-LAHI-S-SALIHIYN. ASH-HADU ANLA ILAHA ILA LAHU WAHDAHU LA SHARIKA LAHU WA ASH-HA-DUANNA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA RASUULUH. ALLAHUMMA SALLIY ALA MUHAMMAD WA ALA AALI - MUHAMMAD, KAMA SALAYTA ALA

IBRAHIMA, WA AALA AALI IBRAHIM. INAKA HAMIDON MAJID. WA BARIK ALAA MUHAMMAD WA ALAA AALI MUHAMMAD KAMA BARAKTA ALA IBRAHIMA WA ALAA AALI IBRAHIM, INAKA HAMIDON MAJID " which means, "Greetings, prayers and our good deeds are for Allah. Peace, mercy and blessings of Allah be on you O Prophet. May peace be upon us and on the devout slaves of Allah. I testify that there is no god but Allah (the person when reciting this testimony points out the index finger as a sign of monotheistic belief) and I testify that Muhammad is His slave and messenger. O Lord, bless Muhammad and his family as You blessed Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most-Praised, The Most Glorious. O Lord, bestow Your grace on Muhammad and his family as You bestowed it on Ibrahim and his family. You are the Most-Praised, the Most- Glorious". It is recommended to add to the above reading the following supplication in which the person asks for Allah's protection from four evils: "ALLAHUMMA INII AUDHU BIKA MIN ADHABI JAHANNAMA, WA MIN ADHABIL QABR. WAMIN FITNATIL MAHYAA WAL-MAMATI, WAMIN FITNATIL MASIHID-DAJAAL ". which means: "My Lord, I seek Your protection from the torment of Hell, from the torment of the grave, from the trials in lifetime and after death, and from the impostor Masihid-dajaal". The person may also make further supplications to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) asking for prosperity both in this life and in the life hereafter, and to bestow His favors on his parents and other Muslims. This was the confirmed practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as reported by Ibn Massoud (may Allah be pleased with him).

15. Having completed the At-Tashahud the person terminates the prayer by saying two times: "AS-SALAMU ALEYKUM WA RAHMATU-LAAH", which mean: " Peace and mercy of Allah be upon you", turning the face first to the right and then, to the left.

That is the end of the Fajr prayer.

Performance of the Dhuhr Prayer

Number of Rakaat:
Four.
Recitation:
Qur'anic recitations in this prayer is made in a low voice by the Imam (leader), the followers or whoever prays alone.
Performance:

1. The first two Rakaats of the Dhuhr prayer are performed in the same manner as the two Rakaats of the Fajr prayer with regard to Nos. 1 up to 14. However, in the case of Dhuhr prayer, the sitting in No. 14 represents the first Tashahud in which case, the person is required to recite only the first part of the words of witness up to "..WA ASHADU ANNA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA RASUULUHU". Meanwhile, it is preferred that, for the Dhuhr prayer, the Qur'anic recitations after the Al-Fatihah are of medium length (i.e. neither too short nor too long).

2. Upon concluding the recitation of the first part of At-Tashahud in No. 14, the person, instead of proceeding to action No. 15 (of the Fajr prayer), stands up for the two remaining Rakaats of the Dhuhr prayer which are also performed in the same manner as the first two.

3. Upon performing No. 12 in the fourth Rakaat, the person sits for the final At- Tashahud and comes up with full recitation of the same as in No. 14 of the Fajr prayer. The person then proceeds on to No. 15 and thus, concludes the prayer.

Performance of the Asr Prayer

Number of Rakaat:
Four.
Recitation:
Qur'anic recitations in this prayer are made in a low voice by the leader (imam), the followers, or whoever prays alone.
Performance:
It is performed similar to the Dhuhr (Noon) prayer in all respects.

Performance of the Maghrib Prayer

Number of Rakaat:
Three.
Recitation:
Qur'anic recitations in this prayer is made loudly in the first two rakaats by the leader (imam) or by whoever prays alone.
Performance:

1. The first two Rakaats of this prayer are performed in the same manner as the first two Rakaats of the Dhuhr prayer. However, the person praying behind an Imam in a congregation is required to listen to the Imam's recitation of the Al- Fatihah, in the first two Rakaats. Upon the Imam's completion of the Al-Fatihah, the person says Ameen with the rest of the congregation and then recites Al-Fatihah silently by himself. The person thereafter, may not need to recite Qur'anic passages himself but should pay attention to the Imam's recitation. Meanwhile, Qur'anic recitations in this prayer after the Al-Fatihah by the Imam (or by whoever prays alone) may be either long or short passages of the Holy Qur'an.

2. Upon raising the head from the second prostration of the second Rakaat, the person sits down for the first At-Tashahud and recites the first part of the words of witness (i.e.: up to .... WA ASHADUANNA MUHAMMADAN ABDUHU WA - RASUULUHU).

3. The person thereafter stands up for the performance of the third and last Rakaat of the Maghrib prayer and upon raising the head from the second prostration of this third

Rakaat, the person sits down for the final At-Tashahud and recites the words of witness in full.

4. The person then concludes the prayer by the "Tasleem" (i.e. action No. 15 of the Fajr prayer).

Performance of the Isha Prayer

Number of Rakaat:
Four.
Recitation:
Qur'anic recitations in this prayer is made loudly in the first two Rakaats by the Imam and by whoever prays alone.
Performance:
This prayer is performed in the same manner as the Dhuhr (Noon) and the Asr (Afternoon) prayers. However, when praying behind an Imam, the person is required to listen to the Imam's recitation of the "AL-FATIHAH" in the first two Rakaats. Upon the Imam's completion of the Al-Fatihah the person says Ameen with the rest of the congregation and then recites Al-Fatihah silently by himself. The person thereafter may not need to recite Qur'anic passages himself but should pay attention to the Imam's recitation.

Forgetfulness Prostrations (Sujuud Sahw)

As human beings we are by nature subject to mistakes and errors and as mentioned earlier, if a person fails to perform any of the pillars of the prayer and/or necessary duties, the person is required to mend the error by coming up with two prostration at the end of the prayer known as "Sujuud Sahw" i.e. forgetfulness prostration, although, where a pillar(s) is omitted a repetition of the missed pillar(s) is necessary.

There are some disagreements between religious jurists regarding this subject as to whether it should be performed before or after the words of peace (Tasleem). What seems to be a fair solution, however, is that if a person made an addition to the prayer, then, the two prostration of forgetfulness should be performed after reciting the Tasleem. While, if a deduction is made from the prayer, then, the two prostration of forgetfulness should be performed before reciting the Tasleem. However, where both an addition and a deduction may have been made in the course of the prayer, then, in this case, the forgetfulness prostration can be performed before the recitation of the words of peace (Tasleem).

Various Instances Where "Sujuud Sahw" Becomes Apparent

A. Where a Pillar of the Prayer is Omitted:

1. Where, for example, a person forgets to recite the "Al-Fatihah" but remembers the same before Rukuu or in the process of bowing, then, the person is required to resume a proper standing position and read the "Al-Fatihah" and some other verses from the Holy Qur'an as usual. If this omission occurred in the first rakaat and the person remembers the omission while in the course of the second rakaat, then, the person should count the second rakaat as being the first rakaat and treat the first one in which he/she missed to recite the "Al-Fatihah" as null and void. The person should then proceed to perform one more rakaat to complete his/her Salaat and at the end, recite the "Tasleem" (words of peace) after which, the person comes up with the two prostration of forgetfulness and again, recites the Tasleem.

2. If, however, while sitting for the final "At-Tashahud", (the words of witness), a person remembers that he missed a prostration, then the person should immediately come up with the missed prostration and sit back again to repeat a recitation of the At-Tashahud. The person would then say the Tasleem to conclude the prayer, but would thereafter come up with the two prostration of forgetfulness before once again reciting the Tasleem. The above are some examples where errors are committed in performing FARAIDH (i.e. Pillars) of the Salaat, wherein, the person is not only required to repeat the missed act, but also, to come up with the two prostration of forgetfulness.

B. Where a Necessary Duty is Omitted: However, where someone misses a "WAJIB" (Necessary Duty) of the prayer, the mere coming up with the two prostration of forgetfulness will suffice without the need for repeating the missed act. Thus, if a Wajib act is missed and the person remembers it after starting another action of the prayer, then, he is not required to repeat the forgotten act but would proceed to complete the rest of the Salaat and at the end just before the Tasleem, the person comes up with the two prostration of forgetfulness.

C. Where a Preferred Act is Omitted: As for SUNNANS (Preferred Acts) of the prayer which may be missed, neither is it a requirement to repeat them nor is the forgetfulness prostration needed.

Private Supplications Recited Upon completing Prayers

In accordance with the teachings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), there are quite a number of private supplications and words of extolling Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) i.e. "Dhikr" which are highly desirable and recommended for recitation at the end of each prayer. These supplications and extollations (dhikr) are non-obligatory and constitute separate forms of "IBADAH" (Worship), hence, reciting them or failure to do so, does not affect the prayer.

However, a person who recites these supplications and extollations would certainly achieve much additional rewards besides the reward Allah grants for the Salaat, INSHAA ALLAH.

We shall now discuss some of these supplications and extollations:

1. Immediately upon completing the prayer it is recommended for the worshipper to invoke Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and to ask for His forgiveness by saying: "ASTAGHFIRULLAAH " three times, which means: I seek Allah's forgiveness.

2. Immediately thereafter, the worshipper may recite the following supplication: "ALLAHUMMA ANTA SALAAM, WA MINKA SALAAM, TABARAKTA YAA DHAL JALALI WAL IKRAAAM " which means: "O Allah, You are the source of peace and from You comes peace, exalted You are, O Lord of Majesty and Honor."

3. It is also recommended for the worshipper to recite thereafter the following supplication: "LA ILAHA ILAL-LAHU WAHDAHU, LAA SHARIKA LAHU, LAHUL-MULKU, WALAHUL-HAMDU, WAHUWA ALAA KULI SHEY-IN QADIIR" which means: "There is no god but Allah, He is one, He has no partner, to Him belongs sovereignty and to Him belongs praise and has power over all things".

4. The person may thereafter say: "ALLAHUMMA LAA MANI'A LIMAA A'7'EYTA WALA MU'Y'IYA LIMA MA NAA TA WA LA YA NFA U DHA L JA DDI MINKALIAD" which means: "O Allah, none can withhold what You have granted, and none can grant what You have withheld, and nothing can be offered by the rich,- richness and fortune comes from You alone".

5. And says thereafter: "LAA HOWLA WALAA QUWATA ILLA BILLAAH" which means: "There is no might or power, except from Allah".

6. Also, the person may thereafter say: "LAA ILLAHA ILAL LAAHU WALA NA'ABUDU ILLA IYAHU, LAHU NIMA TU WALAHUL FADHLU, WALAHUL THANAA AL-HASSAN" which means: "There is no god but Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and we worship none but Him, to Him belongs prosperity, and to Him belongs favors and to Him belongs all good praises".

7. The person may also say: "LAA ILAHA ILLAL LAAHU MUKHLISINA LAHU DIINA WALAO KARIHAAL KAFIRUUN" which means: " There is no god but Allah, (and we) offer Him sincere devotion even though the unbelievers may detest it".

8. Also, say: "ALLAHUMMA A'INNI 'ALA DHIKRIKA, WA SHUKRIKA, WA HUSNA IBA DATIK" which means: "O Allah, help me in remembering You, thanking You and conducting my worship to You in a perfect way".

9. The person also says:

1. SUBHANA -ALLAH - Glory be to ALLAH - (33 times).
2. AL HAMDU-LILLAH- Praise be to Allah - (33 times)
3. ALLAHU AKBAR - Allah is great (33 times).

Then, at the end of the above three recitations, the worshipper recites the following supplication: "LAA ILLAHA ILAL LAAHU WAHDAHU LAA SHARIKA LAHU, LAHUL MUL-KU, WALA-HUL HAMDU, WAHUWA ALAA KULI SHEY'INN GADIIR" which means, "There is no god but Allah alone, He has no partners, to Him belongs dominion and to Him belongs praises, and He has power over all things". By this supplication, the worshipper makes up a total of 100 readings. In this regard, it was reported in an authentic prophetic saying that whoever comes up with this 100 phrases at the end of every obligatory prayer: ***"Allah will forgive him, even if his sins were as abundant as the foam of the sea"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

10. It is also recommended for the person to recite thereafter "AYAT AL KURSI" i.e: the verse of the Throne (Holy Qur'an 2:255) which has the following English meaning: ***"Allah! there is no god but He, the Living the Self-Subsisting, the Eternal. No slumber can seize Him nor sleep. To Him belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth. Who is there can intercede in His presence except as He permitteth? He knoweth what (appeareth to His creatures as) before or after or behind them. Nor shall they compass aught of His knowledge except as He willeth. His Throne do extend over the heavens and the earth, and He feeleth no fatigue in guarding and preserving them or He is the Most High, the Supreme (in glory)"***. The importance of this verse was confirmed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in an authentic saying that: ***"Whoever recites this verse at the end of every prayer, nothing will prevent him from entering Paradise"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

11. It is also strongly recommended that the person recites the following three chapters of the Holy Qur'an after each prayer:

1. Surah Al-lkhlaas (Purity of Faith) Qur'an, Chapter 112.
2. Surah Al-Falaq (The Dawn) - Qur'an, Chapter 113.
3. Surah An-Naas (Mankind) - Qur'an, Chapter 114.

Note: It is preferred that each of these three chapters be recited three times at the end of Fajr (Dawn) and Maghrib (Sunset) prayers; while, each chapter may be recited only once at the end of the other obligatory prayers namely, Dhuhr (Noon), Asr (Afternoon) and Isha (Evening) prayers.

Things Which Invalidate The Prayer (Mubdilatu-Salaat)

Prayer if performed well with due regard to its conditions, pillars, duties and preferred acts, truly illuminates the heart and purifies the soul. It is the means by which man communicates with Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and therefore, one should keep it free from anything which would render it invalid. In Arabic Language, the acts which invalidate the prayer are known as "Mubdillatu-Salaah" and we now list them here below:

- Speaking or talking in the course of the prayer.
- Laughing in the course of the prayer.
- Eating while praying, even though what is eaten maybe as small as a piece of dates.
- Drinking while praying, even though what is drank maybe as small as taking only a mouthful.
- If someone in the course of the prayer remembers that he/she did not actually perform the ablution (wudhu), then, such a person is required to break the prayer and get out to perform Wudhu.
- If a person's ablution (wudhu) gets invalidated in the course of the prayer, then the prayer becomes invalid.
- The prayer is also invalidated by carrying out the Rukuu and Sujuud postures with haste and without ease. While in prostration, bobbing (jerking) up and down like chicken pecking food from the ground is not allowed.
- Turning oneself away from the direction of the Qiblah also invalidates the prayer.

Things Which Are Not Preferred In The Prayer

- Turning of the eyes up. The Prophet (peace be upon him) strongly admonished against this as can be noted from the following saying: ***"What is the matter with the people who raise their eyes towards the sky while praying? They shall have to refrain from this or else they will lose their eyesight"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari). It is also disliked to look right and left and the Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard says: ***"It is a deception with which Satan deceives the servant while in prayer"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari). The person while praying is required to direct his eyes at the point of prostration.

- Closing the eyes in the course of the prayer.

- Placing the hands above the kidneys or on the waist. Hands should be placed over the chest.

- Wiping the earth (where to prostrate) more than once to remove pebbles on it.

- Reading of the Holy Qur'an, while in Rukuu and in Sujuud positions.

- Making unnecessary movements in the course of the prayer such as touching the chin (beard) or fidgeting the fingertips or mending up the clothes e. g. the head turban etc.

- Entering to prayer, while food has been served to the person before the prayer or while badly in need of passing excrement and / or urine. The Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard says: ***"Prayer is not valid when food has been served and when a person is in need of relieving himself of excrement and/or urine"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

- It is prohibited for someone in a congregational prayer to raise the head from Rukuu and Sujuud positions ahead of the Imam. The Prophet (peace be upon him) strongly warned persons doing this as can be noted from the following saying: ***"Doesn't the person who raises up his head before the Imam fear that Allah will turn his head to that of a donkey or make his face look like a donkey"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Other Important Notes Regarding Prayer

- If a person is smelling of garlic, onion, leek, cigarettes, tobacco or anything similar which has an unpleasant odor and which may cause inconvenience to others, then, such person must not join the congregational prayer and should keep away until the odor dissipates from him/her. The Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard says: ***"A person who has eaten garlic or onion or any other bad smelling thing should not approach our Mosques because the angels are offended by the things which human beings get offended from"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

- The whole earth is for the Muslims a place of prayer and virtually clean. Therefore, anyone can pray wherever he may be when the time of prayer comes if there are no Mosques nearby. However, it is forbidden to perform prayers at cemeteries, except the funeral prayer administered over a dead Muslim. It is also forbidden to pray inside toilets and/or bathrooms and at filthy places. All prayers performed in such areas are considered null and void.

- When entering a mosque it is the tradition that the person steps in with the right foot reciting the following supplication: "BISMILLAH WASSALATU WASSALAMU 'ALAA RASULULLAAH, ALAHUMMA AFTAH LII ABWABA RAHMATIK" which means: "In the name of Allah, and blessings and peace be upon the messenger of Allah., O Allah open for me the gates of your mercy." And, when departing from the mosque, the person steps out with the left foot first saying: "BISMILLAH WASSALATU, WASSALAMU 'ALA RASULULLAAAH, ALLAHUMMA IGHFIR LII DHUNUBII WAFTAH LII ABWABA FADHLIKA" which means: "In the name of Allah ... may blessings and peace upon the messenger of Allah. O Lord, forgive me my sins and open for me the gates of your favors".

- It is not proper to come to the prayer hastening but the person is required to come calmly and in a state of serenity and tranquility. If a person joins the prayer while the Imam/congregation are in Rukuu position, then, that particular rakaat (unit) is counted for him as if he started the rakaat (unit) with the rest of the congregation from the start. However, if a person joins the prayer after the Imam/congregation has arisen from the Rukuu position, then, that particular rakaat is not counted for him, but he should continue praying with the rest until the Imam completes the prayer after which the person is required to come up with the missed rakaat(s) in order to complete his prayer.Here below is an example: Assuming that a person joins the Dhuhr prayer in the first rakaat but after the congregation has already risen from the Rukuu position, the person would complete the remaining part of the rakaat with the rest, although such rakaat is not counted for him. The Imam and the congregation proceed to the second rakaat, but the late comer should count the second rakaat as his first rakaat. Thereafter, the congregation sits for the first "At-Tashahud" and would then, stand up to perform the third rakaat and subsequently, the fourth rakaat up to the second and final "At-Tashahud". After the Imam reads the words of peace to conclude the prayer, the late comer under discussion, would thereby stand up to perform one more rakaat in lieu of the rakaat missed at the beginning.

- It is allowed for a person to pray while wearing shoes, but before doing so, the person is required to check on the soles of the shoes, and should there appear any trace of wetness and/or defilement, this should be cleaned well on the ground.

- A person is not allowed to pass in front of another person who is praying no matter how long and how much inconvenience the waiting may cause. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ***"If a person who passes in front of a praying person could realize the gravity of the sin, it would have been better for him to wait for forty rather than pass in front of the praying person. The narrator was not sure whether the Prophet (peace be upon him) said forty days or forty months or forty years"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

- If a person who wishes to perform a prayer fears others may pass in front of him in the course of his prayer, it is advisable for such a person to place any kind of object in front of him before commencing the prayer. Such an object is known as SUTRA in Arabic and it acts as a boundary for the person so that people may pass only beyond the object. If thereafter, any person attempts to pass between him and the object, the person in prayer may push away the passer-by. But if the passerby insists on passing, the praying person has perfect right to fight the intruder for he is an evil one.

- A mature woman (who have reached the age of puberty) passing too close in front of a praying male person who has no" Sutra", has the effect of invalidating the prayer, except when the prayer is being done in the grand mosque of Makkah.

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- A mature woman (who have reached the age of puberty) passing too close in front of a praying male person who has no" Sutra", has the effect of invalidating the prayer, except when the prayer is being done in the grand mosque of Makkah.

Congregational Prayer

Performance of the prayer together with the other Muslims in congregation at Mosques is a duty required from every male Muslim of sound mind. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says: ***" ...And bow down your heads with those who bow down (in worship)"*** (Qur'an 2:43).

Much emphasis has also been made by the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the Congregational Prayers as can be gathered from the following authentic sayings:

1. ***"Performing prayer in congregation is 27-times better than prayer performed on individual basis"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

2. ***"Ibn Maktum said: I told the Messenger of Allah that I am blind and my house is faraway and I have no suitable guide to the mosque.. do I not have permission to pray at home? The Prophet (peace be upon him), asked me: 'Do you hear the call to the prayer?' I answered: Yes, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) then said to me: 'Respond accordingly (by coming to the mosque)'"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

3. ***"If there happens to be (even) three persons in a village, desert or jungle and they do not pray in congregation, Satan would surely dominate them. So, observe your prayers in congregation, for certainly, the wolf devours the lonely sheep"*** (Reported by Abu Dawoud).

4. ***"I swear by Allah in Who's possession is my life. I feel like asking for firewood to be gathered and order for the prayer to be held and the call for prayer (Adhaan) to be announced and then ask someone to lead the prayer, and I go after those who failed to join the congregational prayer and set fire to them while they are in their houses"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

By virtue of the above quoted Qur'anic verse as well as the various sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), congregational prayer is incumbent upon every male Muslim unless a person is excused from doing so as a result of one or more of the following reasons:

- Sickness.
- Fear that going to the Mosque will bring about undue hardships, or peril from an enemy.
- Heavy rain.

It is permitted for women to attend the congregational prayers at the mosques and their husbands may not prevent them from doing so unless it is feared that harm will come to them. However, it is preferable for women to perform prayers at their homes. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ***"Do not prohibit women to attend prayer at mosque, but prayer at their homes is better for them"*** (Reported by Imam Ahmad).

If, however, women decide to go out for prayer at the mosques, they should neither dress nor perfume themselves in a manner that may attract the attention of men. At the mosques, it is an established tradition that women perform their prayers preferably in their own partition behind the rows of men.

Purpose of the Congregational Prayer

Performance of the prayer in congregation is a great Islamic practice through which equality and justice are made manifest. Here, the ruler and the subject, the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the powerful and the down-trodden, the influential and the wretched all assemble in rows shoulder to shoulder in front of Allah, the Almighty, with neither differences nor distinctions between them - all of them servants of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). They meet on common ground in the houses of Allah thinking only of Him in humility in due regard to the following verse of the Holy Qur'an: ***“Verily, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you”*** (Holy Qur'an 49:13).

Islam is a religion of great social order and when a Community of Muslims in a given area meet at the Congregational Prayers five times each day, then certainly we can imagine the innumerable benefits that could be derived - people knowing each other; people learning each others affairs; people meeting their leaders and community heads; people discussing and solving their day-to-day problems; people cooperating etc. Thus, cohesiveness, unity, love and brotherhood become truly evident among the Muslim community.

In an Islamic state, the head of the state or his representative is supposed to lead the five daily congregational prayers at the central mosque of the capital city as was the practice of the Prophet (peace be upon him), in the first Islamic state established at Medina. The leader or head of the Islamic State would, of course, be a person of unquestionable integrity, known to be more knowledgeable than his subjects and above all righteous.

Persons wishing to perform a congregational prayer would choose from amongst themselves an Imam (leader) who has the qualities described above and who would stand in front of the others at the center of the row.

After the second call for the prayer (Iqamah) is performed, the Imam turns towards the congregation and would endeavor to straighten out the row(s) and urge the congregation to stand close to each other as much as possible. These acts were established practices of the Prophet (peace be upon him) as can be noted from the following sayings:

- ***“Straighten your rows and stand close to each other in prayer...”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).
- ***“You shall have to straighten your rows in prayer or else Allah will create differences among you”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

The Imam, thereafter, starts the prayer with the words of "Takbiiratil Al-Ihraam" as usual and the congregation would follow suit. The congregation would then proceed to complete the prayer as discussed in detail earlier.

The Prayer Of A Travelling Person (Musafir)

Islam is a religion full of mercy and because of the hardships and inconveniences which a person usually undergoes during travels, Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has made certain concessions to the traveler. One of these concessions is that traveler may shorten some of the obligatory prayers. Allah says in the Holy Qur'an: ***"When ye travel through the earth there is no blame on you if ye shorten your prayers"*** (Qur'an 4:101).

Because of this grant from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), it is an established practice that a traveling Muslim may shorten the four (4) rakaats obligatory prayers into two rakaats only. Thus, the Dhuhr, Asr and lsha prayers may each be shortened into two rakaats. However, the Maghrib and the Fajr prayers cannot be shortened and are to be performed in full.

It is also an established practice that the traveler may combine some of the obligatory prayers. Thus, the Dhuhr prayer may be delayed until the time of the Asr prayer when both will be performed; or, the Asr prayer may be brought forward to the time of the Dhuhr prayer when both will be performed. Likewise, the Isha prayer may be brought forward to the time of Maghrib prayer; or, the Maghrib prayer may be delayed until the time of Isha prayer. The Fajr prayer can neither be brought forward or delayed and has to be performed at its prescribed time.

Characteristics of combining the prayers

1. Each prayer will be performed separately.
2. Only one Prayer Call (ADHAN) shall be made for both prayers but two Second Calls (IQAMAHS) shall be required (i.e. one Second Call (Iqamah) shall be made separately for each prayer).

If we may give an example, assuming that a traveler wishes to combine Dhuhr and Asr prayers by bringing the Asr prayer forward to the time of the Dhuhr prayer, the person would proceed as follows:

I. The person would first come up with the Call for prayer "Adhaan" intending it for both the two prayers.

II. The person would then come up with the second call "Iqamah" for the Dhuhr prayer.

III. The person would then perform the Dhuhr prayer shortening it to two rakaats only.

IV. After completing the Dhuhr prayer, the person stands up and makes another second call "Iqamah" for the Asr prayer.

V. The person would then perform the Asr prayer also shortened to two rakaats only.

Note: A traveler may lead the prayer as an "IMAM" of the residents of the place he is

visiting. And in such a case, he (being an Imam), may perform only two rakaats for the Dhuhr or Asr, and/or Isha prayers while, the residents he is leading, shall upon his completion continue to complete the remaining two rakaats of the respective prayers. However, in such cases, it is desirable that the traveler who may act as an Imam first gives notice to the congregation regarding his position and his intention to shorten his prayer so that the congregation continues to complete the prayer.

On the other hand, if the traveler has to pray behind an Imam who is a resident of the place he is visiting, then in such case, the traveler shall pray with the Imam all the four (4) rakaats as usual.

Performance Of The Prayer By One Who Is Sick

A sick person has to perform the prayer in accordance with the person's conditions. The Prophet (peace be upon him) was once asked by a sick companion as to how he can perform the prayer and the Prophet (peace be upon him) replied him as follows: ***“Pray standing but if unable then by sitting and if still unable then do so whilst on your back”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Thus:

- If, it is impossible for the sick person to stand up, he/she shall perform the prayer by sitting and making token gestures for the "Rukuu" and "Sujuud" positions by bringing the head slightly down as indication for "Rukuu" and slightly further down as indication for "Sujuud".
- If, it is impossible for the sick person to pray sitting, he/she shall perform the prayer by lying on his/her back. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says: ***“Those are they (men of understanding) who remember allah while standing, sitting and reclining”*** (Qur'an 3:190-191). The person's legs are directed towards the Qiblah and will make mere token gestures as far as possible with the head for the bowing (Rukuu) and the prostration (Sujuud) positions.
- If, still it is impossible for the sick person to perform the prayer while lying as discussed in No. 2 above, then, the person shall perform the prayer by heart. The person shall come up with all the required recitations as far as possible and will recall to mind all the necessary postures for the prayer.

Such is the importance of the Prayer in Islam that a person must perform it no matter what his/her condition.

Voluntary Prayers

Besides the prescribed obligatory prayers, a person may come up with as many voluntary prayers as is possible. Through voluntary prayers a person receives additional rewards and through them he draws closer to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) although a person will not be punished for neglecting to perform voluntary prayers.

However, the Prophet (peace be upon him) had set a tradition of practicing certain voluntary prayers before and/or after the obligatory prayers and every Muslim is strongly recommended to perform them. These are as follows:

a. DHUHR (NOON) PRAYER: Four (4) rakaats before (with each two rakaats performed separately) and two (2) rakaats after.

b. MAGHRIB (SUNSET) PRAYER: Two (2) rakaats after.

c. ISHA (EVENING) PRAYER: Two (2) rakaats after.

d. FAJR (DAWN) PRAYER: Two (2) rakaats before.

These Voluntary prayers are known in Arabic Language as (Rawatib) which may be construed to mean definite practices and the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to preserve their performance continuously whenever in residence. However, during his travels he used to omit their practice except the two rakaats before the Fajr prayer. Performance of these two rakaats is so important that the prophet (peace be upon him) said: ***"These two Rakaats are more important to me than the whole world"*** (Reported by imam Muslim).

While there is no objection to perform these optional prayers at the mosque, it is preferred to perform them at home in view of the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"The best of the prayers are those which are fulfilled at one's home, with the exception of the obligatory prayers (which are to be performed with the congregation at the Mosque)"*** (Reported by Imam Abu Dawoud).

Fulfilling these twelve (12) voluntary prayers is a means to gain admission to paradise as can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"Whoever prays optionally twelve rakaats every one day and night, Allah will reward him by an established dwelling in the paradise"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Besides the above twelve definite voluntary prayers, the person may also pray four optional rakaats before Asr (Afternoon) prayer, and two before Isha (Evening) prayer, because these were also reported to have been practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him).

Times When Performance of Voluntary Prayers is Prohibited

There are certain times when voluntary prayers are not allwoed to be performed and these are as follows:

1. In between the Fajr Prayer and the rising of the sun.
2. In between when the sun is close to its zenith and the Dhuhr Prayer.
3. In between the Asr Prayer and until sunset.

However, a person can perform the two rakaats prayed as salutation to mosques whenver a person enters a mosque even though the time of entering the mosque may coincide with one of the above stated timings. This is accordance with the following Prophetic (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) saying: ***"Anyone of you entering a mosque, should not sit until after perfoming two rakaats"*** (Reported by Imam Al-Bhukari).

Juma'h Prayer (Friday Con- Gregational Prayer)

Besides the five obligatory prayers, Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) has also ordained the "Jumah" (Friday Congregational Prayer) as a necessary prayer on the Muslim Nation (Ummah) as is made clear in the following verse of the Holy Qur'an: ***"O ye who believe, when the call is proclaimed to prayer on friday (the day of assembly), hasten earnestly to the remembrance of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and leave off business (and traffic). That is best for you if ye but knew"*** (Qur'an 62:9).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also, in exhorting the Muslims to the importance of the Friday prayer said: ***"They (people) will have to stop neglecting the Friday prayer or otherwise, Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) will seal their hearts and they will be counted among the negligent"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also says: ***"He who deliberately neglects three consecutive Friday prayers, Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) will make a mark on his heart"*** (Reported by Abu Dawood).

By virtue of the above Qur'anic verse as well as the respected sayings of the Prophet (peace be upon him), the Friday Congregational Prayer is, therefore, a duty (Wajib) required from every adult and free Muslim who is in residence.

Friday is a glorious day in Islam and represents a great weekly meeting in which the Muslims gather in the houses of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) leaving aside all worldly affairs. The "Jumah" prayer is therefore specific with a sermon in which the mosque preachers (Imams) discuss and deal with the daily problems of the Muslim's society and give enlightenment from the torch of Islam. The "Jumah" prayer reflects that Islam is a great social order which fosters brotherhood, abhors disunity and discourages evils.

The Jumah is not a duty on women, who instead, may perform the obligatory Dhuhr (Noon) prayer at their homes although they may join the Jumah prayers, if by doing so does not affect their household duties, or cause them any inconvenience.

The Performance of the Juma'h Prayer

Performance of the Juma'h prayer is only allowed in the Congregational Mosques where, Muslims congregate and from where the Imam gives them advice and spiritual insights.

The tirne for the Juma'h prayer is the time of the Dhuhr prayer, although, some Muslim jurists and scholars are of the opinion that it is permissible to perform it before the sun reaches its zenith.

Much importance and reward has been attached by Islam to the timings of going to the Friday Prayer as can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"Any person who takes total ablution (ghusl) on friday and goes out for the friday prayer in the first hour (i.e. early), it is as if he sacrificed a camel (in Allah's cause), and whoever goes in the second hour, it is as if he sacrificed a cow,- and whoever goes in the third hour, it is as if he sacrificed a horned ram, and whoever goes in the fourth hour, it is as if he sacrificed a hen, and whoever goes in the fifth hour, then, it is as if he offered an egg. When the Imam comes out (to deliver the sermon), the angels present themselves to listen to the sermon"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

However, it is a recommended Islamic tradition that the person comes up with the following pre-requisites before going out to the Friday Prayer:

- Undertaking Ghusl (total bath). The Prophet (peace be upon him) in this regard says: ***"Ghusl on Friday is necessary (Wajib) upon every adult person"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).
- Putting on the best and cleanest of clothes.
- Perfuming of oneself.

Having undertaken the above pre-requisites, the person then proceeds to the mosque in tranquility fully conscious of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). Upon reaching the mosque, the person enters by stepping in with the right foot first proclaiming the following private supplication: "BISMILLAAH WASALAA TU - WASSALAMU 'ALAA RASULULLAAH. ALLAHUMMA AFTAHLII ABWAABA RAHMATIK" which means: "In the name of Allah ... May peace and blessings be on the messenger of Allah. O Allah open to me the gates of your mercy ".

Having entered the mosque, the person comes up with two rakaats (minimum because there is no certain amount of Rakaats to be performed before Friday Salat) as salutation to the mosque in accordance with the following famous saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"If anyone of you enters the mosque, do not sit until you have performed two rakaats"*** (Reported by Imam Al-Bukhari).

The person then await for the sermon to start and may in the meantime read the Holy Qur'an and/or come up with whatever supplications he can.

When the Imam enters the Mosque, the "MUADHIN" (Prayer Caller), would make the "ADHAAN", (i.e. the call to the prayer) and the person would be answering the call in the manner already discussed earlier.

When the Muadhin completes the Adhaan, the Imam climbs the pulpit to deliver the sermon and the person is required to devote his whole attention and, is forbidden to talk or keep oneself busy with even minor activities in the course of the sermon. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says in this regard: ***"He who performs ablution properly and comes to the Jumah prayer and listens to the sermon attentively, will have his sins from the previous Friday plus three more days forgiven and he who occupies himself***

with pebbles during the sermon has performed badly” (Reported by Imam Muslim).

Upon completion of the first part of the sermon, the Imam sits down for a brief pause and then, stands up again for the second part of the sermon. After that, he comes down from the pulpit and the MUADHIN makes the second call for the prayer IQAMAH and a two rakaat congregational prayer is accordingly performed which is the same in all respects to the Faj'r prayer.

Upon completing the Jumah prayer, a person may come up with voluntary prayers which if done at the Mosque consists of four rakaats (each two rakaats performed separately) but if, done at home (upon one's return from the mosque), consists only of two rakaats as the Prophet (peace be upon him), used to do.

The Prayers Of The Two Feasts

These are:

- The prayer of the Feast of Breaking the Fasting of the month of Ramadan (known as 'Idul-Fitr Prayer).
- The prayer of the Feast of Immolation (known as 'Idul-Al-Adha Prayer).

We shall now discuss the mode of performing each of these prayers.

Idul-Fitr Prayer

Upon completion of the obligatory fasting of the blessed month of "Ramadan", Muslims celebrate the occasion of breaking the Fast by festive celebration which last for three days. The Muslims welcome the feast with prayer and private supplications and by giving praise to Almighty Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). This prayer is performed as follows:

- On the first day of Shawwal (the month that follows Ramadan) the person goes to the 'id Mosque or praying ground having undertaken the following recommended acts:

1. Taken total ablution (Ghusl).
2. Dressed in the best of clothes (preferably new clothing).
3. Assumed a breaking of the Fast by eating at least a few pieces of dates. This is in accordance with the tradition of the Prophet (peace be upon him), and an odd number is preferred i.e. 3, 5, 7, 9 and so on.
4. It is the practice (Sunnah) to head to the 'id praying center by walking. Upon arrival at the place of prayer the person sits and waits for the prayer to begin.
5. After about 20 minutes from clear sun rise, the imam stands up for the prayer and loudly signifies the entering into prayer by reciting the "Takbiiratil lhraam" that is "ALLAHU AKBAR". The whole congregation also follows suit by reciting the "Takbiiratil-lhraam".
6. As usual, with any other prayer, the person thereafter comes up with the opening supplication known as "DUA AL ISTIFTAAH".
7. After that, the Imam says "ALLAHU AKBAR" 6 more times and the congregation would follow likewise.
8. After completing the recitations of the words of greatness which total up to seven, the Imam would then seek the protection of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) from the cursed satan in a low voice by saying "AUTHU B'LJBILLAHI MINASH SHAYTANIR-RRAJIIM". He would thereafter silently invoke Allah's name by saying: "BISMILLAHI-R-RAHMANI-R--RAHIIM" and then recite "AL-FATIHAH" (the opening chapter of the Holy Qur'an) in a loud voice. The followers (congregation) would then say "Ameen"

together loudly after the Imam completes reciting the "Al Fatihah". Each follower would then recite "Al-Fatihah" silently. It is recommended that the Imam thereafter recites the whole of chapter 87 of the Holy Qur'an i.e. "SA BIHISMA " (Glorified be the name of thy Lord, the Most high). The followers are required to listen to the Imam's recitation.

9. The Imam then raises his hands up to the level of his shoulders or ears performs "Rukuu" saying "ALLAHU AKBAR." 'Thereafter he raises his head up from bowing saying "SAMI'A ALLAHU LIMAN HAMIDA" followed by the congregation saying "RABBANNA WALAKAL HAMD". The Imam and the congregation thereafter proceed to prostration saying "ALLAHU AKBAR".
10. After the prostration, the Imam would resume the standing position for the second rakaat and the congregation would follow him up accordingly.
11. Thereafter, the Imam would say "ALLAHU AKBAR" 5 times and the congregation would perform likewise, and would recite the private supplication between each "Takbiir" as already discussed in point 4 above.
12. Then, the Imam recites "AL-FATIHAH" and for this second rakaat it is preferred that he thereafter recites the whole of chapter 88 of the Holy Qur'an i.e. "Al-Ghasiya", (The Disaster) and the congregation would listen attentively.
13. Thereafter, the Imam completes the Rukuu (bowing) and Sujuud (prostration) positions in the manner already discussed and sits back for the words of witness "At-Tashahud". Then, the Imam concludes the prayer with the words of peace i.e. "ASSALAMU ALEYKUM WA RAHMATULLAH" and of course, the entire congregation would follow the Imam in all these acts as is the custom in all prayers.
14. After concluding the prayer, the Imam would climb the pulpit to deliver the 'Festival Sermon', and starts the same with nine recitations of "ALLAHU AKBAR" with the congregation saying after him the same. After listening to the sermon, the congregation disperses. Listening to the sermon is not obligatory but is recommended.

Idul-Adha Prayer

'IDUL ADHA", (Feast of Immolation) prayer is performed on the 10th day of the 12th month of Islamic "Hijra" Calendar and is performed exactly in the same manner as enumerated and discussed above for the 'Idul Fitr Prayer.

Salatul-Istisqua (Rain Seeking Prayer)

Drought is a natural calamity which when it befalls causes undue hardships and disaster to all living matter. It is for this reason, that the Prophet (peace be upon him) made it a custom on the Ummah to resort to this prayer whenever affected by this calamity and seek the mercy and grace of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) to shower on them His bounty of rain.

This prayer is performed similar to the 'Id (Feast) prayers in all respects. It may be performed anytime during the daylight except those times when the performance of voluntary prayers is prohibited. Muslim scholars are largely of the opinion that the best time for its performance is the same time for the performance of the 'Id prayers i.e. after about twenty (20) minutes from clear sunrise.

In the sermon at the end of the prayer, the Imam (leader) will exhort the congregation of the need to repent and return to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) pointing out that the lack of rain is the result of the sins of mankind.

The Imam would thereafter raise his hands in prayer and the congregation would also do the same. It is confirmed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to raise his hands in prayer until his armpits appeared. While in this situation, the Imam and the congregation are required to invoke Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) as much as possible and call upon Him for forgiveness and to shower on them His bounties. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says in the Holy Qur'an: ***" ... ask forgiveness from your Lord, for He is Oft-forgiving, He will send rain to you in abundance"*** (Qur'an 71: 10-11).

Note: It is desirable that the head of the Muslim state or his representative gives prior notice to the Muslim community of the need to perform "Salatul-Istisqua" at a certain future date. This is to enable as large a congregation as is possible to attend the prayer.

Eclipse Prayer (Salatul-Kusoof)

The eclipse of the Sun and the Moon are two natural phenomena which, when they occur, cause dismay and unrest to those who witness them. For this reason, it is the tradition in Islam to perform a special prayer when these phenomena occur requesting Allah, the Almighty, to bless the Muslim Nation (Ummah) by clearing the eclipse. The Prophet (peace be upon him) says: ***"The sun and the moon are two of the signs of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and are not eclipsed for the death or livelihood of any person. Therefore, when you witness the eclipse of the sun and moon resort to prayer"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

This prayer is composed of two rakaats which are performed in congregation and for which neither a first call (Adhan) nor a second call (Iqamah) is required. It is performed in the following manner:

1. After reciting "Al-Fatihah" the Imam would recite a long passage from the Holy Qur'an with the congregation listening attentively to the recitation.
2. Upon completing the recitation, the Imam comes up with the bowing "Rukuu" position and as usual, the congregation would follow him accordingly.
3. The Imam thereafter, raises up from the "Rukuu", but instead of continuing on to the prostration "Sujuud" position, he once again resumes the recitation of some passages from the Holy Qur'an after reciting chapter 1 (Al-Fatihah).
4. After the above recitation, the Imam comes up with another "Rukuu".
5. The Imam then, raises up from the Rukuu position and proceeds to prostration "Sujuud".
6. The Imam has thus, completed the first rakaat, and from the'Sujuud" position, he would resume the standing position to begin the second rakaat which would be performed exactly as the first rakaat in the manner described above.
7. Upon raising the head from the second prostration of the second rakaat, the Imam would sit for "At-Tashahud" and would then conclude the prayer as usual with "Tasleem".

Note: Upon completing the eclipse prayer as discussed, it is recommended that the Imam delievers a brief sermon in which he speaks of the lessons to be learned from the manifestations of the eclipse. He draws the attention of the unmindful to the greatness of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and that He possesses unrestricted power to act in any way He wishes with His creations.

The Witr (Odd Number) Prayer

The "Witr" (Odd Number Prayer) is a voluntary prayer traditionally practiced by the Prophet (peace be upon him) regularly whether he was present at his home place as a resident, or was on a journey. Such was the importance attached to this prayer by the Prophet (peace be upon him), that some Muslim jurists and scholars are of the opinion that it is a necessary prayer. The Prophet (peace be upon him) exhorting the Ummah (Muslim Nation) to the importance of the Witr prayer says: ***“Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) is One and loves Witr, therefore O people who believe in the Qur'an perform Witr prayers!”*** (Reported by Imams Dawood and Tirmidhi).

The time for the Witr Prayer begins from the end of Isha (Evening) prayer and continues until the Fajr (Dawn) prayer and is performed as the last prayer of the night. Preference is given to its performance in the later part of the night as can be noted from what has been confirmed by Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) that: ***“The Prophet (peace be upon him) used to offer Witr prayers in all the later part of the night such that his Witr prayers used to be finished by about dawn”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

The Prophet (peace be upon him) also said: ***“Make the Witr prayer your last prayer of the night”*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

It is known as Witr (Odd Number) prayer because of its nature, in that, it is completed in units (rakaats) of odd numbers, thus, 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. The minimum number of rakaats in the Witr Prayer is one and the maximum which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform was eleven.

However, Muslims largely performed this prayer in three units (rakaats) which may be performed in either of the following methods:

- The worshipper may perform two rakaats (similar to the Fajr prayer). In doing so, may go for the short and/or medium passages of the Holy Qur'an preferably chapter 87 "Sabihisma Rabbikal A'Alaa" - (Glorify the name of the Lord, Most High) which maybe recited in the first rakaat, while, chapter 109 "Al- Kafiruun" (The non-believers) maybe recited in the second rakaat. As usual, the words of witness are recited at the end of the two rakaats followed by the Tasleem to conclude these first two rakaats. The person then stands up to perform a third rakaat on its own. Chapter 112 "Al-lklas" of the Holy Qur'an maybe recited in this unit. It is the practice to recite a supplication of obedience to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) known as "Qunuut" in this last rakaat and if a person wishes to recite this supplication, he may do so upon resuming standing from the Rukuu position and after saying: "SAMI'A ALLAHU LIMAN HAMIDA" followed by "RABBANA WA LAKAL HAMD". The QUNUUT goes as follows: "ALLAHUMMA AHDINII FIMAN HADEYTA, WA'AFINII FIMAN 'AFEYTA, WATAWALANII FIMAN TAWALEYTA, WABARIKLII FIMA A'DEYTA, WAQINII SHARA MAA QADHEYTA, FA INNAKA TAQDII WALAA YUQDAA ALEYK, INNAHU LAA

YADDILU MAN WALEYTA WALAA YA'IZU MAN A'ADEYTA, TABARAKTA RABBANA - WATA'ALEYTA " which means: "O Lord, lead me to true faith with those You have guided, pardon me with those You have pardoned, protect me with those You have protected, bless for me what You have given me, keep me safe from evils. You have ordained. It is You Who decrees and it is not decreed upon You, no one under Your care is brought down and no one to whom You show enmity can be exalted, O Lord, You are the Most Praised, Most Sublime". Or, the person may recite any of other supplications of obedience (Ounuut) which the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to say in his prayers. Upon completing the recitation of this supplication of obedience, the person would say "ALLAHU AKBAR" and then, proceed to prostration, thereafter, sits up for the recitation of (At-Tashahud) and concludes the prayer as usual with the (Tasleem). And thus, is the Witr Prayer done.

- Alternatively, the person may perform the Witr prayer by praying all the three rakaats continuously without break. After rukuu in the third rakaat, the person would recite the Qunuut supplication as discussed above and would then proceed to prostration, then recites At- Tashahud and concludes the prayer with the Tasleem.

Tarawih Prayer

The Islamic Fasting Month of Ramadan is a blessed month in which Muslims are generally exhorted to come up with as many optional activities as is possible for great rewards are awarded for deeds performed during this holy month. It is in appreciation of this that the Prophet (peace be upon him) traditionalized for the Muslim Ummah a voluntary prayer to be performed during the nights of this holy month. This voluntary prayer is known as "Tarawih" or "Qiyaam".

The virtue of this prayer can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"Anybody who performs Tarawih prayer during the month of Ramadan with deep sense of belief and scrutiny will have his previous sins forgiven"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

Indeed, the Prophet (peace be upon him) manifested the importance of this prayer by personally leading its initial congregations although he did not insist on its performance for fear it was made obligatory on the Ummah. The mother of the faithful Aisha (may Allah be pleased with her) says: ***"Many people performed Tarawih with the Prophet (peace be upon him) in the first night and many more in the second night. In the third night, even a larger congregation attended the Mosque to perform the prayer with the Prophet (peace be upon him) but he did not go out for them. In the next morning the Prophet (peace be upon him) told them that I saw your assembly but nothing prohibited me from coming out to you except the fear that it be made obligatory upon you"*** (Reported by Imam At-Tirmidhi).

After the death of the Prophet (peace be upon him) there was no longer any fear of this prayer being made obligatory and it was Caliph Umar who during his reign reactivated the performance of this prayer in congregation. Since then, the Ummah has practiced this prayer in congregation but it is permissible for someone to perform it on individual basis, although much preference is given to performing it with the congregation as can be noted from the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him):***"Whoever prays Tarawih with the congregation till the Imam leaves will be rewarded as if he prayed the whole night"*** (Reported by Imams Ahmad and Tirmidhi).

This prayer is performed in rakaats (units) of two each except the last rakaat which is always prayed oddly as one. It is confirmed that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to perform eleven rakaats when praying Tarawih.

Salatul-Isstikhara (Prayer To Seek Allah's Guidance)

It is natural that in his day-to-day affairs a Muslim is confronted with important issues requiring decision making and which may force the person to undergo much thinking, anxiety and even worry before the person is able to decide affirmatively or negatively. It is with due regard to such situations that the Prophet (peace be upon him) accustomed for the Muslim Ummah a voluntary prayer to which a person may resort to and through which he/she seeks from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) true guidance and the ability to reach the proper decision over the particular matter.

This prayer is known in Arabic as SALATUL-ISSTIKHARA and its importance is such that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to teach his companions about it the same way he used to teach them the verses of the Holy Qur'an. The companion Jabir (may Allah be pleased with him) said that the Prophet (peace be upon him) used to exhort us to practice Isstikhara for all our affairs.

The manner of performing this prayer is that the person comes up with a voluntary prayer of two rakaats (units) at anytime during the day or night and upon completing the same the person recites a private supplication in which he/she seeks the guidance of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). The supplication goes as follows: "ALLAHUMMA INNI ASTAKHYIRUKA BI'ILMIKA WA ASTAQDIRUKA BI QUDRATIKA WA AS-ALUKA MIN FADHLIKA-AL-AZIM, FA INNAKA TAQDIRU WA TA'LAMU WALAA AQDDIRU WATA'ALAMU WALAA A'LAMU, WA ANTA 'ALLAMUL-GHUYYUB. ALLAHUUMA IN KUNTA TA'LAMU ANNA HADHAL-AMRA. (Here the person makes a mention of the matter for which guidance is sought) KHEIRUN LEE FII DINII WAMA'AASHII WAAAQI-BATA AMRII FAQDURHU LII, WA YASSIR-HU LII THUMMA BAARIK LII FIIHI, WAIN KUNTA TA' LAMU ANNA HADHAL-AMRA (Also at this point the person makes a mention of the matter for which guidance is sought) SHARRUN LEE FII DINII WA MA'AASHII WA'AAQIBATA AMRII, FASRIFHU 'ANNII WASRIFNII 'ANHU WAQDUR LEE AL-KHEYRA HEYTHU KANA THUMMA ARDHINII BIHII". Which means: "O Lord, I seek Your guidance, through Your knowledge and power: and I ask You of Your great bounties,- for You decree and I do not decree,- and You know and I know not,- You are the knower of invisible. O Lord, if You know that this matter (and here the person states the matter for which guidance is sought) is of benefit to me in my religion, in my livelihood and in its outcome, decide it for me. And make it easy for me and then bless it for me, and if You know that this matter (and here he names it again) is bad for me in my religion, in my livelihood, and in its outcome, turn it from me and divert me from it and decree good for me wherever it may be and make me pleased with it".

Having sought Allah's guidance as above, the person then resumes his/her routine affairs and in the meantime awaiting the due response from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) which could appear to the person by way of feelings in the person's heart of either

confidence or otherwise. Thus, where the person feels in his/her heart a sense of vigor, optimism and satisfaction about the intended undertaking, then the person may construe this as a positive response from Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) and may accordingly proceed on with the intended undertaking. Where, however, the opposite is true and the person's doubts, and/or worries are not cleared, then the person may avoid the intended undertaking for it could mean doom for him/her. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) says: ***"It is possible that ye dislike a thing which is good for you, and that ye love a thing which is bad for you. But Allah knoweth and ye know not"*** (Qur'an 2:216).

Indeed, the essence of this prayer is to test someone's trust in Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala), hence, the need to abide by the guidance of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) accordingly whether this may mean pursuing or abandoning the intended undertaking. Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) also says: ***"And if anyone puts his trust in Allah, sufficient is Allah for him, for Allah surely accomplishes His purpose: Verily, for all things has Allah appointed a due proportion"*** (Qur'an 65:3).

Salatul-Janaza (Funeral Prayer)

Islam has set certain rules and regulations with regard to attending to a deceased person and some of these rules are as follows:

1. In most cases, death is preceded by sickness and it is the duty of the Muslims who happen to know the sick person to pay him a visit and make supplications to Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala) for his recovery. Indeed, a sick Muslim has a right to be visited by other Muslims who are acquianted with him.

2. If and when a Muslim is about to die, it is the practice that the person is directed to the Qiblah (the sacred mosque in Makka) after which the "Shahada", (the words of witness) is proclaimed over the person and he/she is also urged to proclaim the same. Thus: "LAA ILAAHA ILLAL LAAH ". Which Means: " There is no god but Allah". This is in due regard to the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"Exhort your dying ones to affirm the Shahada"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

3. Where the person dies, the eyes are to be closed, body covered with garments and the people around him are required to avoid talking of anything else, except that which is good, such as saying for example: "O Allah forgive him and have mercy on him". This is in accordance with the following saying of the Prophet (peace be upon him): ***"Do not say over your dead ones except supplications for the angels say: Ameen, on your supplications"*** (Reported by Imam Muslim).

4. In Islam a Muslim is respected whether alive or dead, and therefore, if a Muslim dies, the religion commands us to give the body total ablution (Ghusl) and to perfume it properly.

5. A deceased male Muslim is given a bath only by other male Muslims, although, nothing forbids his wife from giving him a bath. Likewise, a deceased Muslim woman is given a bath only by other Muslim women, although, nothing forbids a husband from giving a bath to his deceased wife.

6. The deceased should be wrapped in a shroud. If the deceased is a woman, she should be wrapped in a shroud composing of five pieces of white garments, while, a deceased male should be shrouded with three pieces of white garments.

7. If a woman dies where there are no other women nearby to undertake the ritual bath or if a man dies in a similar situation where there are no other men nearby, then, the deceased person is only given a dry ablution (AT-Tayammum) by rubbing the earth over his/her face and hands. Because in such cases, complete bath is impossible. Proper funeral prayer is then performed over the deceased and thereafter buried accordingly.

8. The funeral prayer is a collective obligation on the residents of a particular area. This is known as "FARDH-AL- KIFAYA" in Arabic. And if no one comes out to perform the prayer on a deceased Muslim of that community, the community as a whole is deemed sinful in the sight of Allah (subhanahu wa ta'ala). But, if it is performed by some of the people, then, the rest of the community are absolve of the sin.

9. Women are not supposed to follow the funeral procession as can be noted from the following confirmation by Umm Atiya (may Allah be please with her) who said: ***"We were forbidden by the Prophet (peace be upon him) without enforcement to follow funeral processions"*** (Reported by Imam Bukhari).

How the Funeral Prayer is Performed

The prayer over the deceased person takes the following form:

- The funeral prayer has neither Adhaan nor lqamah.
- The deceased is laid down on the ground with the face directed towards the Ka'ba.
- Where the deceased is a male, the Imam would stand facing towards the head of the dead body, while, if the deceased is a woman the Imam would stand facing the middle part of the dead body. Meanwhile, the congregation would be standing behind him in rows.
- The funeral prayer is performed with one standing only and has neither bows (Rukuus) nor prostration (Sujuuds).
- The Imam begins the prayer by raising up his hands up to the lobes of his ears and comes up with the words of greatness i.e. "Allahu Akbar". The congregation would follow likewise.
- Then, everybody including the Imam would recite "Al-Fatihah".
- After completing the recitation of the Al-Fatihah, the Imam, once again comes up with the words of greatness i.e. "ALLAHU AKBAR", and the congregation would follow likewise. After this, the Imam and the congregation would recite for themselves in a low voice the supplication for the Prophets ABRAHAM and MUHAMMAD, (may peace and blessings be upon them), which is usually recited by the Muslims during their daily prayers in the second part of the At- Tashahud. The supplication goes as follows: "ALLAHUMMA SALLI 'ALAA MUHAMMADIN WA 'ALAA AALI MUHAMMADIN KAMA SALEYTA 'ALAA IBRAHIMA WA 'ALAA AALI IBRAHIMA, WABARIK 'ALAA MUHAMMADIN WA 'ALAA AALI MUHAMMADIN, KAMAA BARAKTA 'ALAA IBRAHIMA WA 'ALAA AALI IBRAHIMA INNAKA HA'MIDUN MAJIDUN", which means: "O Lord give peace and blessings to Muhammad and his family like You blessed Abraham and his family and

shower Your blessings on Muhammad and his family like You showered on Abraham and his family in the two worlds, You are the Most praised, the Most wonderful".

- The Imam would thereafter proclaim the words of greatness i.e. "ALLAHU AKRAR" for the third time and the congregation would follow likewise.

- The Imam and the other members of the congregation would thereafter make the following private supplication for the deceased if he were an adult male Muslim. The supplication consists of prayer for self, for the deceased person and for the Muslims at large and it goes as follows: "ALLAHUMMA IGFIR LIH'AYINNA WA MAYITINAA, WA SHAHIDDINAA WA GHAA'IBINAA, WA SAGIIRINAA, WA KABIIRINA, WA DHAKARINAA WA UNTHANAA. ALLAHUMMA MAN AHYEYTAHU MINNAA FA'HYIHI 'ALAL ISLAM, WAMAN TAWAFEYTUHU MINA FATAWWAFAHU 'ALAL IIMAAN. ALLAHUMMA IGHFIR LAHU WAR-HAMHU,WA'AFIHI WA'AFU'ANHU, WA-KRIM NUZULAHU, WA - WA-SI'I MUDKHALAHU, WAGASILHU BIL-MAA-I WATHALAJI, WALBARAD, WANNAQIHI MINA-D-DUNUBI KAMA YUNAQA THOUBUL ABYADHU MINA DANAS, WABADIL-HU DAARAN KHEIRAN MIN DAARIHI, WAZOWJAN KHEIRAN MIN Z0WJIHI, WAD - KHIL HU JANNA TA, WA'AIDHU MIN'ADABIL-QABRI WA 'ADHABI-NAAR, WAAFSAH LAHU FII QABRIHI, WANAWAR LAHU FIIHI " which means: "O Allah forgive those of us who are still alive and those who have passed away, those present (at the congregation) and those who are absent, and our young and the elderly, our male and female lots. O Allah, whomever Thou wishes to keep alive from amongst us make him live according to Islam and whomever Thou wishes to die from amongst us, let him die in the state of being a believer (with faith). O Allah forgive him and have mercy upon him and keep him safe and sound and excuse him for his faults, and grant him respectable place in the heaven, and make his grave spacious, and wash him with water, snow and ice and purify him of all his sins like a piece of white cloth is cleared from dirt, and grant him a new house better than his (previous) house and a family better than his (previous) family and a wife better than his (previous) wife, and allow him to enter the paradise, and protect him from the torture of the grave and the hell-fire".

- If the deceased is an adult woman, then the above supplication shall be repeated in full and the only change will be that the supplication shall be given a feminine reading in the Arabic language. Thus: "ALLAHUMMA IQFIR LIHAYINNA WA MAYITINAA, WA SHAHIDDINAA WA QAAIBINAA, WA SAQIIRINAA, WA KABIIRINA, WA DHAKARINAA WA UNTHANAA. ALLAHUMMA MAN AHYEYTAHU MINNA FAHYIHI ALAL ISLAMI, WAMAN TA WAFEYTUHU MINA FA TA WWAFAHU ALAL IIMAAN .... ALLAHUMMA IQFIRLAHA WAR-HAMHA WA'AFIHA WAAFU ANHA WAAKRIM NUZULAHA, WA-WA-SI'I MUD- KHALAHA, WAQASILHA BIL-MAA'I WATHALAJI WALBARADI, WANNAQIHA MINA-D-DUNUBI KAMA YUNAQA THOUBUL ABYADHU MINA DANAS, WABADILAHA DAARAN KHEIRAN MIN DAARIHA, WAZOWJAN KHEIRAN MIN ZOWJIHA, WAD-KHILHA JANNATA, WA - AIDHA MIN-ADABIL-QABRI WA ADHABI-NAAR, WAAFSAH LAHA FII QABRIHA, WANAWAR LAHA FIIHI " which means: " O Allah forgive those of us who are still alive and those who have passed away, those present (at this congregation) and those who are absent, and our young and

our elderly, our male and female lots. O Allah, whomever Thou wishes to keep alive from amongst us make him live according to Islam and whomever Thou wishes to die from amongst us, let him die in the state of being a believer (with faith) ...... O Allah forgave her and have mercy upon her and keep her safe and sound and excuse her for her faults and grant her respectable place in the heaven. And make her grave spacious and wash her with water, snow and ice. And purify her of all her sins as like a piece of white cloth is cleared from dirt and grant her a new house better than her (previous) house and a family better than her (previous) family and a husband better than her (previous) husband. And allow her to enter the paradise, and protect her from the torture of the grave and the hell-fire".

- If the deceased is a boy, then the following supplication would be recited: "ALLAHUMMA IJ'ALHU DHUKHRAN LIWALIDEYHI WA FARADAN WA AJRAN MUJAABAN ALLAHUMMA THAOIL BIHI MAWAASIINAHUMA WA-AZZIM BIHI UJUURAHUMA WA ALHIQ-HU BISALIHI SALAFIL MU'MINIIN WAJALHU Fl KAFALAATI IBRAHIM WAQIHI BIRAHMATAKA 'ADHABAL JAHIIM" which means, "O Allah, make him forerunner of his parents and make him a reward and a treasure for them, make him one who will pleads for his parents and accept his pleadings. O Allah heavy him in their scales and grant them big reward and join him with the good believers and make him under the sponsorship of Abraham and protect him from the hell fire".

- If the deceased is a girl, then the above supplication would be repeated in full and the only change would be that the supplication must be given a feminine reading in the Arabic language.

- The Imam would thereafter, proclaim the words of greatness for the fourth time and the congregation would also say it after him. Immediately thereafter, the Imam turns his face only to the right side proclaiming the words of peace i.e. "ASSALAMU ALAYKUM WA - RAHMATULLAAH" to signify the completion of the prayer. The congregation would also follow likewise, and thus, the funeral prayer is completed.

Note:

i. If a person joins the funeral prayer while the Imam is about to complete the same, then, the person would continue with the congregation until when the Imam concludes the prayer, then, the person would complete by himself whatever he missed of the prayer following the above procedure.

ii. If a late-comer fears that the body of the deceased may be taken away before he completes the pray over him, then, such a person may only come up with the Words of greatness i.e. "ALLAHU AKBAR" four times without necessarily reciting the required supplications. The person thereafter, comes up with the words of peace, thereby, ending the prayer.

iii. If a person is unable to pray over a deceased person before burial, then, it is permitted for him to pray over the deceased's grave.

iv. If a person who is faraway is told of the death of another, then such a person may pray over the deceased person in absentia with the intention as though the deceased is actually before him/her.

v. Funeral prayer is also recommended over a baby born dead after completing four months inside the mother's womb. However, no funeral prayer is required over a baby born dead before completing four months inside the mother's womb.

A Summary Of The Different Types Of Prayers

We shall now summarize the most common different types of prayer which a Muslim will get exposed to in his day to day life:

A. The Obligatory Prayers (Al Faraidh). These are the Five Daily Prayers as follows:

- The Fajr (Dawn) Prayer.
- The Dhuhr (Noon) Prayer.
- The A'sr (Afternoon) Prayer.
- The Maghrib (Sunset) Prayer.
- The Isha (Evening) Prayer.

B. The necessary (Wajib) Friday congregational prayer.

C. Other confirmed Traditional Prayers. Thus:

- The Prayers of the Two Feasts (the Idul Fitr and Idul Adha).
- The Prayer for seeking bounty of rain from Allah.
- The Prayer during the Eclipse of the Sun and Moon.

D. The twelve (12) definite voluntary prayers performed before and/or after the obligatory prayers.

E. The Witr (Odd Number) Prayer.

F. The Tarawih (Month of fasting supererogatory) prayers.

G. The prayer for seeking Allah's guidance.

H. The Funeral Prayer.